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**For sacrificial seeds
like Alabama A&M,
Madness likely brief**

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Alabama A&M
guard Olive Trotter



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on misuse of gas
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**Stripes' Internet
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Special section inside

Volume 63, No. 331 © SS 2005 G

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2005

50¢

Air Force ordered to slash spending

Jumper seeks to avoid 'budget crisis' due to rising cost of wars Page 3

'We know what we do'

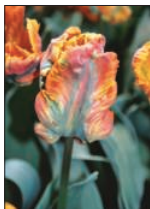
Despite debate about women
in combat, female soldiers
are confident in the role

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Army Capt. Tristan Vasquez, 25, of Cody, Wyo., a platoon leader for the 127th Military Police Company at Forward Operating Base Falcon, Iraq, earned a Bronze Star for her actions during an ambush in an August in northwest Baghdad. Six members of Vasquez's platoon earned commendations with valor.

VINCE LITTLE/Stars and Stripes

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

World

Alleged Macedonian war crimes: The Yugoslav war crimes tribunal unsealed an indictment Tuesday against Macedonia's former interior minister and a top police officer for the murder and torture of ethnic Albanians. The two are the final suspects to be charged by the U.N. court, in The Hague, Netherlands.

Ljube Boskovski, 44, the former minister, and Johan Tarculovsky, 30, a senior police officer, were each charged with three counts of murder, cruel treatment and wanton destruction for the August 2001 raid on the village of Ljuboten, just outside Skopje.

Kyrgyzstan elections: Protesters held a regional and a district governor captive for a second day Tuesday in western Kyrgyzstan Tuesday, while thousands rallied in the south to protest alleged election fraud and demand President Askar Akayev resign.

The opposition accuses authorities of widespread abuses in Sunday's parliamentary runoff elections, in which Akayev secured an overwhelmingly loyal parliament. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe said the vote had significant problems.

Iran nuclear program: Iran on Tuesday said economic incentives may help improve foreign relations but won't permanently stop Tehran from pursuing a nuclear program it says is for generating electricity but Washington believes is for weapons.

The United States agreed last week to drop opposition to Iranian membership in the World Trade Organization and to allow some sales of spare parts for civilian aircraft as part of a European plan that offers economic incentives for Iran to permanently freeze its nuclear activities.

Chechen rebel reward: Russia paid \$10 million for information that helped it track down a Chechen rebel leader who was killed last week in a special forces operation, its security service said Tuesday.

The Federal Security Service said it would offer the same reward for Shamil Basayev, the Chechen warlord who claimed responsibility for September's school hostage-taking in Russia that killed 330.

Bobby Fischer detention: Chess legend Bobby Fischer shouldn't be exempted from Japan's rule that foreigners who are ordered deported must be sent to their homeland, Japan's top immigration official said Tuesday.

Fischer and his supporters are asking that he be allowed to go to Iceland, where he has been granted a special passport for foreigners, instead of the United States where Japan has ordered him sent. Washington has sought Fischer—who became world chess champion in a 1972 match in Iceland against the Soviet Union's Boris Spassky—on charges of violating international sanctions against the former Yugoslavians by playing chess there in 1992.

States

Big Dig leaks: The independent engineering specialist who led an investigation into



Beauty queen on trial: Sharron Nicole Redmond demonstrates how she held the gun when she shot Kevin Shorter as she backed away in her car, during her testimony Monday in Savannah, Ga. Redmond, 23, is charged with murdering Shorter in a confrontation outside the home of another woman he was dating, four months after she was crowned Miss Savannah 2003. She has admitted firing the gun, but claims it was in self-defense.

leaks at Boston's \$14.6 billion Big Dig project says he can no longer vouch for the safety of its tunnels.

The project bordered Interstate 93 underneath downtown Boston and connected the Massachusetts Turnpike to Logan International Airport.

Engineer Jack K. Lenley said new information has surfaced that more than 40 large sections of tunnel wall contain construction defects and that fireproofing material has been damaged by leaks.

Gary Condit lawsuit: Former California congressman Gary Condit has won an undisclosed sum of money and an apology from writer Dominick Dunne over his claims about the lawmaker's role in the 2001 disappearance of intern Chandra Levy, according to media reports.

In a statement, Dunne said he did "not say or intend to imply that Mr. Condit was complicit in her disappearance, and to the extent my comments may have been misinterpreted, I apologize for them," The Sacramento Bee reported.

On "ET Online" in January 2002, Dunne was quoted as suggesting Levy was taken away by someone on a motorcycle as a favor to Condit.

Phil Spector trial: Prosecutors are asking a judge to permit evidence at Phil Spector's murder trial that the record producer has a history of pulling guns on women, according to court filings.

The prosecution motion, unsealed Monday in Los Angeles, lists nine occasions dating to 1972 when Spector allegedly pointed a gun at someone.

Spector, 65, who created rock 'n' roll's "Wall of Sound" recording technique, claims B-movie actress Lana Clarkson committed suicide at his home in suburban Alhambra. He remains free on \$1 million bail.

Suspicious bomb attack: Prosecutors have decided against a retrial of a former

medical examiner accused of staging a bizarre bomb attack against himself.

A mistrial was declared March 1 after three weeks of testimony against former Shelby County Medical Examiner Dr. O.C. Smith in Memphis, Tenn. The jury deadlocked 9-3 for acquittal.

Smith was found in a county morgue stairwell in June 2002 with his feet, hands and head wrapped in barbed wire and a bomb hung around his neck. Smith said he was attacked by an unknown assailant who threw a caustic chemical in his face. Investigators eventually concluded the attack was staged.

Prison hostages trial: An inmate defending himself against charges he raped a guard and held her captive in a prison watchtower in Phoenix for 15 days questioned prospective jurors about whether they had seen the hostage crisis on television.

Ricky Wassenaar, 41, who is serving time for armed robbery and assault, is charged with sexual assault, kidnapping, assault and attempted murder.

Laci Peterson conviction: Scott Peterson's lawyers said in court papers that newly discovered evidence could have spared the former fertilizer salesman from a death sentence in the slaying of his pregnant wife.

Defense lawyer Mark Geragos said prosecutors withheld evidence that a state prison inmate claimed he heard that Laci Peterson had interrupted a burglary at a neighbor's home in Modesto on Dec. 24, 2002—the day she disappeared. Scott Peterson claims he went fishing that day, and Geragos says the tip "points to the conclusion that Laci was alive after Scott left for the day."

But prosecutor David Harris said the burglary happened two days after Laci Peterson's disappearance.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

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Terror war forcing Air Force to cut costs

BY SCOTT SCHONAUER

Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — The rising cost of the war on terrorism and in Iraq is forcing major Air Force commands, including U.S. bases in Europe, to cut costs and help avoid a "budget crisis."

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper has ordered the commands to slash spending and delay programs considered a lower priority compared to the war.

The service projects to be \$3 billion short in maintenance and operations and have a \$730 million shortfall in military personnel funding by the end of the fiscal year. Jumper told commanders in a March 1 message.

Gen. Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong, the top Air Force commander in Europe, already

Jumper urges USAFE, other commands to cut costs for travel, supplies and hires

has directed headquarters staff and each base in the region to reduce spending, headquarters spokesman Capt. Chris Watt said Tuesday.

"We knew this fiscal year's budget was going to be tight," Watt said in an e-mail to Stars and Stripes. "Months ago commanders were advised to look closely at their individual budgets to ensure they continue to meet mission readiness as well as provide for the safety and wellness of their troops and quality of life programs."

The headquarters staff and the bases plan to reduce spending by cutting travel

costs, the purchase of supplies and equipment and new civilian hires, Watt added.

Jumper issued the order to cut costs as the Bush administration's \$75 billion 2005 supplemental military funding bill awaits approval in Congress. He told commanders that the top two priorities would be to pay for the war on terrorism and efforts to rotate troops for those operations.

"Facilities, business operations, travel, administrative functions, non-deployment-related training and new contracts rank as lower priorities," Jumper said in the memo. "These areas should be slowed

significantly through the end of the fiscal year."

In addition to bases in Europe, other commands already are making some cuts, according to an Air Force press release.

The Air Mobility Command isn't spending as much on travel, supplies and equipment that "don't affect current combat operations," officials said. Facility projects have been limited to emergency work only.

The cuts will not affect flying operations, required maintenance and all "war-related activities."

The Air Force Space Command has delayed some contracts, facility projects, travel, equipment purchases and supplies that are not directly related to the war.

E-mail Scott Schonauer at: schonauer@mail.stripes.osd.mil

Navy monitoring misuse of coupons for gas in England

BY RON JENSEN

Stars and Stripes

RAF MILDENHALL, England — Use of Navy gas coupons in England for anything other than duty travel is not allowed and is being monitored.

This may be news to some Americans stationed in the United Kingdom, but it has been part of the agreement between the United States and the United Kingdom for nearly five decades.

"Duty driving has forever been a requirement," said Lyndon James, director of international law for 3rd Air Force at RAF Mildenhall.

After complaints last fall from Her Majesty's Customs and Excise, the government arm that deals with tax and customs issues, 3rd Air Force is now emphasizing the terms of the 1958 pact.

To that end, only sponsors can purchase the coupons, used to get gas at discount rates, for use at off-base stations and only 50 liters of coupons — about 13 gallons — can be purchased per week. On Tuesday, the 50-liter coupon book of regular unleaded gas was selling for \$32.50, or about \$2.50 a gallon.

More importantly, the coupons are to be used for duty travel only.

James said he met with Customs and Excise representatives at the base Monday to discuss the issue. He declined to discuss specifics, but said, "Our relationship is extremely good at the moment."

The agreement broadly defines "duty travel." It allows participation in activities "organized by, sponsored by or beneficial to" the U.S. forces in the United Kingdom. However, it specifically forbids "pleasure driving."

For years, Americans in the military or connected to it in the United Kingdom have used the cou-

pons for pleasure driving. HMCE, as it is called, complained after finding coupons being used in Scotland and being told by 3rd Air Force that there would be no reason for duty travel there.

James said the agreement allows the U.S. military to "control" the program.

The coupons found in Scotland implied a lack of control. With the new emphasis, he said, the military is living up to its part of the agreement.

The renewed emphasis on the rules greatly affects car travel in the United Kingdom. With the current exchange rate requiring nearly \$2 for the purchase of 1 British pound, a gallon of regular unleaded gasoline on the economy costs about \$6.

"That's bad," said Staff Sgt. Jarrod Kinmer of the 100th Security Forces Squadron at RAF Mildenhall. "That's going to slow down your ability to experience this part of the world."

He spent about \$60 to fill his car at a British station recently, much more than the \$17.30 he spent to fill the same car Tuesday at the base.

Senior Airman John Martin of the 352nd Special Operations Group said he and his wife have decided against a trip to Scotland because of the gas prices.

"It's just too costly," he said.

It doesn't require a nefarious mind to realize that buying and hoarding 50 liters of coupons each week for several weeks will take the family to Cornwall or Yorkshire, Wales, for example.

James pointed out that HMCE is keeping an eye out for misuse.

When HMCE first raised the issue, he said, "Our fear was, quite simply, that if we don't control this system, someone would come in from outside and control it for us."

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STEVE MRAZ/Stars and Stripes

Five-year-old Emiluz Davila approaches her father, Sgt. Manuel Davila, at a welcome-home ceremony for the 272nd Military Police Company on Monday evening. Almost 150 soldiers returned from Iraq following a yearlong deployment. The ceremony took place at Sullivan Barracks Gymnasium in Mannheim, Germany.

272nd Military Police eagerly welcomed back to Mannheim

BY STEVE MRAZ

Stars and Stripes

MANNHEIM, Germany — Emiluz Davila did not want to wait through the pomp and circumstance of the 272nd Military Police Company's welcome home ceremony Monday evening.

After seeing her father, Sgt. Manuel Davila, file into the Sullivan Barracks Gymnasium and rigidly stand at attention, the 5-year-old girl darted to her dad.

Unbeknownst to the child, a structured ceremony welcoming the 149 soldiers home from a yearlong deployment in Iraq still had to take place. Emiluz seemed bewildered that her father would not immediately respond. Soldiers near Davila repressed chuckles while trying to keep a stoic air.

"If I could have, I would have done like the little girl did," said Melenda Davis, who leapt into the arms of her husband, Sgt. Joseph Davis, after the ceremony.

Monday's event marked the end of a crucial mission for the company, which is part of the 95th Military Police Battalion of the 21st Theater Support Command. While in Iraq, the 272nd secured Iraqi police stations and instructed Iraqis at the Iraqi Po-

lice Academy. With its return, the unit became the last major element of the 21st TSC to come home.

One of the unit's foremost missions in Iraq was to create a stable police force in order to provide a secure environment for democracy to flourish. Soldiers with the 272nd said Monday evening that the police forces they helped trained are well on their way.

"Because of the oppression they lived under for decades, the Iraqis were not used to taking initiative and making decisions, said 1st Lt. Tricia Tyler, acting company commander.

"We got to see a big improvement over there," she said. "They began actively policing rather than being reactive."

But the 272nd or "Fighting Deuce" did not complete its mission without sacrifice: Pfc. Cole Larsen died Nov. 13, when his military vehicle rolled over after being hit by a civilian vehicle in Baghdad.

The company soldiered on, however, and one of its successes was working with Iraqi police officers to provide security during Iraq's Jan. 30 election, Tyler said.

"They're proven," said Sgt. Michael Gillens, a team leader with the 272nd MPC. "With time, they'll be up to speed."

E-mail Steve Mraz at: mraz@mail.stripes.osd.mil

B2K to judge talent show

The teen R&B group B2K will be judging students from Gen. H.H. Arnold High School in a talent show at the Taunus Theater on Hainerberg Casern at 1:30 p.m. April 7.

Admission is \$3 and all proceeds will go to the high school.

B2K group members Omarion, J-Boog, Raz B and Lil Fizz, known for their hit "Bump, Bump, Bump" featuring P. Diddy, will be at the Hainerberg post exchange to sign autographs from 4:30 to 6 p.m.

During that time fans can buy CDs and tickets to B2K's April 16 concert in Mainz.

Memorial service set

DARMSTADT, Germany — A memorial service will be held April 9 for a Department of Defense Dependents Schools retiree who died Sunday.

Mary Jane "M.J." Schneider, 57, who taught at Darmstadt Elementary School for 29 years, died of cancer at a German hospital.

Schneider is remembered for her work in promoting the German immersion program in which pupils are taught all subjects in German. She retired in September, but had been ill for a while.

She is survived by her husband, Martin Meisen.

The memorial service will be held at the elementary school at time to be determined.

For details and donation information, call Russ Claus, school principal, at 0651-951-6410.

USAF crew saves fisherman

A crew from the Air Force's 85th Group rescued an Icelandic fisherman Thursday after the man suffered serious injuries aboard his vessel about 20 miles off Iceland's west coast.

The fishermen assigned to the 56th Rescue Squadron at Naval Air Station Keflavik, Iceland, plucked the man from his boat after being notified of his situation by the Icelandic Coast Guard, according to the base public affairs office.

The fisherman had severed his left leg with a fishing line.

Once notified, the 56th RQS launched a HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter with medical and rescue personnel. The helicopter rescued the fisherman's vessel, the Hauker, within 25 minutes.

Pararescue personnel were lowered to the Hauker to stabilize the injured man and hoist him to the helicopter. The man was transferred to a civilian hospital in Reykjavik, where he is being treated for his injuries.

The 56th RQS uses the only permanently based Air Force aircraft at NAS Keflavik to perform rescue, combat rescue and reaction force response services for the 85th Group, the base and the government of Iceland.

N. Korea denounces drill

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea on Friday denounced joint military drills planned this week by the United States and South Korea as preparations for an invasion of the North. It said it would beef up its nuclear arsenal to deter such an attack.

The U.S.-South Korean exercises, which are scheduled to start Saturday, come amid a standoff over the communist North's nuclear weapons program. The United States and its allies have urged Pyongyang to give up its nuclear ambitions and return to stalled international nuclear talks. The North said on Feb. 10 that it would boycott the negotiations, claiming that U.S. nuclear weapons, escalating tension in the two-year-old crisis.

From staff and wire reports



Members of a hazardous material team walk from the Pentagon on Monday after test results detected the presence of chemical or biological agents at the Pentagon's mail delivery building. Officials shut down the facility, which is in a separate building on the northwest side of the Pentagon grounds. Another nearby facility that handles mail for the Pentagon also was shut down.

Anthrax suspected at Pentagon

Tests detected presence in mailrooms at headquarters, nearby facility

BY JOHN J. LUMPKIN

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Another postal facility was closed Tuesday as concern spread over the detection of anthrax in two pieces of mail at military mailrooms. Hundreds of workers were offered antibiotics as a precaution, though no unusual health problems were reported.

Officials said the mail in question had been irradiated, so any anthrax in them was inert when they triggered alarms at the Pentagon mail facility and another nearby facility that handles military mail.

Environmental testing was being conducted on the two military mail facilities and on a third postal facility in the District of Columbia, which was closed Tuesday because it may have handled the mail that went to the two military mailrooms.

Antibiotics were offered to some 200 workers at the D.C. facility and to workers at the military mailrooms. Hospitals were told to be on the lookout for symptoms like respiratory problems, rashes or flu-like symptoms that could signal exposure to anthrax, which can be used as a biological weapon.

"This is a prudent course of action. I don't think there's cause for alarm or panic or undue worry," said Dr. Gregg Pane, director of the city's Department of Health. "We've also mobilized our strategic national stockpile so we have enough antibiotics available should the need arise."

At the White House, spokesman Scott McClellan said President Bush was told of the developments. "The initial testing came back positive. There was some additional testing that was done and it was inconclusive," McClellan said. "We're still waiting on more definitive results."

Also on Tuesday, a hazardous materials team was called to a building occupied by the Internal Revenue Service after a report of a powdery substance found in a letter. IRS officials said in a statement later that "initial tests were negative for chemical or biological substances."

At the Pentagon, officials on Tuesday corrected inaccurate information about when mailroom sensors were triggered over the possible presence of anthrax.

Spokesman Glenn Flood said the mail that tested positive for anthrax passed

through the Pentagon's mail handling facility on Thursday, not Monday, as he previously said. The test results on the mail did not come back until Monday.

Anthrax was confirmed in two items of mail at the two military mail facilities. The Pentagon's mail delivery site, which is separate from the main Pentagon building, was evacuated and shut down Monday. It remained closed, along with a nearby satellite facility in Fairfax County, Va.

Officials disclosed no information about the origins of the two pieces of mail.

Follow-up tests were being conducted at the U.S. Army Research Institute for Infectious Diseases at Fort Detrick, Md., officials said. They would take two to three days to complete.

Anthrax can be spread through the air or by skin contact.

Officials noted that sometimes anthrax sensors can give false-positive results.

In October 2001, someone sent anthrax in letters through the mail to media and government offices in Washington, Florida and elsewhere, raising fears of bioterrorism.

Five people died and 17 more sickened. Those cases have never been solved.

\$371,300 bid for alleged 9/11 Pentagon flag

Owner auctioned flag online to raise money for cancer treatment

The Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. — An American flag said to have been hanging from a construction crane at the Pentagon during the Sept. 11 terrorist attack received a final bid of \$371,300 on eBay Monday, but the cancer patient auctioning it said it could have brought more money.

David Nicholson, 44, of Orange, Va., auctioned the flag to money for his highly specialized treatment for his kidney cancer. But he said the construction company that gave him the flag questioned its authenticity during the 10-day online auction, bringing down its final price.

"With this cancer, I don't need anything else right now," Nicholson said Monday evening, referring to Maryland-based Facchina Construction Co.'s claims it did not have a crane at the Pentagon on Sept. 11.

As part of the auction, Nicholson was giving a letter of authenticity signed by a site supervisor with Facchina Construction.

During the auction, an attorney for Facchina sent a letter to eBay stating that it did not have a crane on site Sept. 11, it did not issue a certificate of authenticity and did not authorize any certificate.

The auction was allowed to

continue after Nicholson faxed eBay a copy of the letter.

Nicholson said he believes Facchina is doing some damage control after losing track of the flag.

"They got a lot of heat and to save face, that's what they did," Nicholson said.

Shawn Peachier, who coordinated Nicholson's auction, said the company was covering up "for essentially throwing away this piece of history."

A call to Facchina's attorney was not returned.

Nicholson said he hoped the high bidder, Todd Schimmel, of Mound, Minn., would go through with the purchase.

In May 2002, Nicholson owned an auction house in Orange where he found the flag tucked away among several boxes of debris from a Pentagon site under construction when the terrorist attack occurred. The flag was featured on several major news networks.

He received offers from around the world to buy the flag, including one of more than \$100,000, but instead framed it and loaned it to several colleges, schools, fire departments and museums in the country.

When he learned he had an aggressive form of kidney cancer Nicholson decided to sell the flag to defray medical costs. "I've got to do what I've got to do," Nicholson said. "Maybe that's why I found the flag."

SETAF assumes command of Afghan mission

BY KENT HARRIS
Stars and Stripes

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — The lightning bolt has given way to the lion.

The Southern European Task Force (Airborne) took over authority of Combined/Joint Task Force-76 from the 25th Infantry Division in a ceremony Tuesday.

SETAF, whose patches feature St. Mark's lion, becomes the first nondivision size element to run the

mission in Afghanistan since the United States forced out the ruling Taliban government following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

"This is the most well-prepared group of soldiers that I have ever handed a mission over to in my 32 years in the United States Army," said Maj. Gen. Eric Olson, the 25th ID commander. He and his headquarters staff boarded a military transport plane after the ceremony and returned to Hawaii.

Maj. Gen. Jason Kamiya, the SETAF commander, will lead a force of about 18,000 troops — anchored by thousands of airborne soldiers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the 1st Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division. But a host of other active and reserve elements from the Army, Marines, Air Force, Navy and coalition partners will fall under the command.

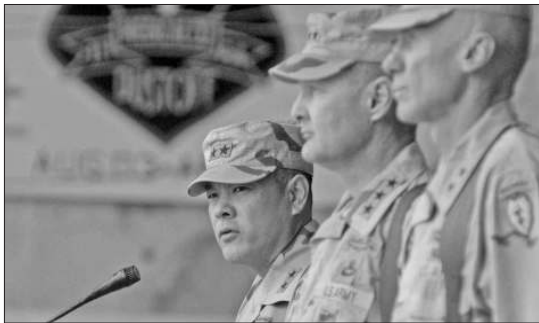
It's not the first time SETAF has led a joint task force in a peacekeeping operation in a country torn by years of fighting. In 2003, it headed a joint operation about a third of the size of the force in Afghanistan to help bring peace to Liberia.

Kamiya said his troops are prepared to carry on the tasks the 25th ID and those before them began. "We are well-trained, well-resourced and are ready for the challenges ahead," he said.

Many elements of the 25th ID task force still are in country and will remain until they've shown their replacements the ropes. The 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry Regiment, a part of the SETAF force in Vicenza, Italy, already is on the ground and conducting operations. But many other elements won't arrive for weeks.



The Combined/Joint Task Force-76 color guard are shown during the transfer of authority ceremony at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan.



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

At Tuesday's transfer of authority ceremony at Bagram Air Base, new Combined/Joint Task Force-76 commander Maj. Gen. Jason Kamiya, left, makes his first speech as commander. Lt. Gen. David Barno, Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan commander, center, and Maj. Gen. Eric Olson, outgoing CJTF-76 commander, listen.

Several hundred soldiers and Marines, some leaving and some newly arrived, watched the ceremony in the base's medevac hangar. Also in attendance: representatives from about a dozen coalition countries, ambassadors from the United States and Canada, Secretary of the Army Francis Harvey, Afghan government officials and Lt. Gen. David Barno, the top American commander in country.

Barno praised the efforts of Olson and the 25th during their year of operations.

Among the highlights he listed: "a stunningly successful Afghan election," that produced President Hamid Karzai, the capture or death of dozens of Taliban leaders and the expansion of provincial reconstruction teams from four to 19 across the country.

Olson asked for a moment of silence for the more than 20 troops in the task force killed in the last year. An Air Force B-1 bomber capped the ceremony, flying by well under the clouds that dozed the base with rain. The country's seven-year drought appears to be over. But the mission has just begun for SETAF.

E-mail Kent Harris at: harris@mail.strips.com

Army secretary: No plans to alter number of troops

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — The Army's civilian leader made his first visit Tuesday to a country where thousands of soldiers have fought the war on terror the last four years.

Secretary of the Army Francis Harvey, who took office on Nov. 19, said he was visiting to see the troops in theater and talk with local commanders to make sure they had what they needed.

Asked about troop levels in Afghanistan and Iraq, he seemed to indicate that no immediate changes were planned.

"There's not a timetable on troops in either theater," he said. "It depends on conditions."

Harvey spoke to a small group of reporters just after Lt. Gen. David Barno, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, had answered a few questions.

Barno, expected to give up his command early next month, said coalition forces had achieved "many successes across the board" in the last year.

He said there were fewer attacks on coalition forces in February than in any other month in the last two years. He said he expects that to change somewhat in April and May as the weather improves, allowing anti-coalition forces more mobility.

Asked about the possibility of permanent American bases in country, Barno pointed to remarks that Afghan President Hamid Karzai made during his election campaign about wanting a long-term relationship with the United States.

He said such issues would not be decided by the U.S. military in any case, but by the respective governments of both countries.

— Kent Harris

Maj. Gen. Kamiya vows progress in Afghanistan

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM
The Associated Press

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — The new operational commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan promised Tuesday to protect the country's parliamentary elections in the fall and played down the unsuccessful hunt for Osama bin Laden and other top al-Qaida and Taliban leaders.

Maj. Gen. Jason Kamiya took command of the 18,000-strong U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan as American troops based in Europe rotate into the country ahead of parliamentary elections expected in September.

"We will continue to focus our energy, No. 1, on supporting the government of Afghanistan's vision," Kamiya told reporters at Bagram Air Base, north of Kabul. "We have the election coming up... and that will be one of our major focuses."

Afghanistan last year passed a new con-

Kamiya, new leader of U.S.-led coalition, puts emphasis on elections, not bin Laden

stitution and held a landmark presidential election won in a landslide by Hamid Karzai despite threats from Taliban militants to disrupt the ballot.

U.S. commanders say their operations helped prevent attacks on the vote. Since then, troops increasingly have focused on supporting local officials and encouraging reconstruction in former Taliban strongholds.

However, fugitives such as bin Laden and Taliban chief Mullah Omar remain at large, as hundreds of militants still mount ambushes and bombings on Afghan and foreign troops.

"The success of this mission should not be predicated upon the amount of fugitives or threat groups we remove," Kamiya said.

"Instead, it should be focused on increasing the capacity, increasing the reach of the Afghan central government."

Kamiya, the commander of the Vicenza, Italy-based Southern European Task Force (Airborne), took over from Maj. Gen. Eric Olson of the Hawaii-based 25th Infantry Division at a ceremony in an aircraft hangar that also was attended by the overall U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Lt. Gen. David Barno.

Barno told a news conference that the hunt for bin Laden and other militant leaders would continue, but he acknowledged that the trail remained cold.

"We don't know where he is. If we had a good definition we'd obviously have appre-

hended him," Barno said of the al-Qaida leader, who some analysts suspect may be hiding near the rugged border with Pakistan.

"We will be successful eventually, but it is a very, very difficult challenge given the immensity of the territory involved, the mountainous terrain, the tough weather."

Barno, who also is expected to leave Afghanistan soon, suggested that the insurgency maintained by Taliban-led militants was losing steam. The Afghan and American governments would decide whether U.S. military bases such as Bagram, which is being equipped with a new runway, would become permanent, Barno said, but he added that it was too early to say when U.S. troop levels might fall.

"We'll be assessing that as the security situation changes, as it gets better potentially, as the Afghan national army and police continue to grow and be more effective," he said.

Debate aside, women know combat roles



PHOTOS BY VINCE LITTLE/Stars and Stripes

Army Capt. Tristan Vasquez, 25, of Cody, Wyo., a platoon leader for the 127th Military Police Company at Forward Operating Base Falcon, Iraq, earned a Bronze Star for her actions last August during an ambush in northwest Baghdad.

Female soldiers face same stresses as male troops

BY VINCE LITTLE

Stars and Stripes

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FALCON, Iraq — Army Capt. Tristan Vasquez of the 127th Military Police Company isn't too fazed by the debate over what roles women should play in combat.

The 25-year-old officer from Cody, Wyo., already has a Bronze Star Medal on her résumé for valor under fire during an ambush in northwest Baghdad last August. Just days later, she helped repel an insurgent attack on the Al-Shoula Iraqi Police Station, which brought an additional commendation.

"We joke around all the time and say there are no women in combat," she said. "That's all right, though. We know what we do."

Vasquez, a platoon leader for the Hanau, Germany-based unit that functions in Iraq under the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 10th Mountain Division, is among several women who fill vital roles within the company as it patrols Baghdad. It might not be classified as combat, but for the last 11 months, women certainly worked on the front lines.

"They say it's an asymmetrical battlefield," said Capt. Kevin Hanrahan, of Whitman, Mass., the 127th Military Police Company commander. "Women are not supposed to be in combat. The fact of the matter is, they are in combat."

Sitting in the rear Humvee of a three-vehicle convoy that day in August, Vasquez said they were headed to the Al-Gazzila Iraqi Police Station — one of 19 the company monitors — when her driver noticed something odd.

"My driver, she goes, 'There's no cars on the road,'" Vasquez said. "That's what we had an RPG land in the lead vehicle and another go underneath the middle vehicle. One struck my window right where my head is. Another went over the back hatch."

"I'm very thankful for our armored vehicle. It saved my life, saved my driver's life and probably saved my gunner from either death or dismemberment."

Under constant gunfire in the 140-degree heat, Vasquez and others fought for nearly 90 minutes. They treated wounded soldiers and worked to save a gunner trapped under a flipped Humvee. They ultimately freed him, but he later died from his injuries.

Six members of Vasquez's platoon earned commendations with valor.

"It was so hot, you literally had to stop fighting to drink water," she said. "It's amazing what soldiers can do. They're incredible individuals. We put them under so many different kinds of stresses. They do an amazing job."

First Lt. Sara Skinner, 27, of Vassar, Mich., another platoon leader, who's on her second tour of Iraq, received the Purple Heart after sustaining shrapnel wounds to her neck and right arm from a mortar attack in early November.

"It went right through my combat patch," Skinner said. "It was not really anything serious. I've seen so many people seriously injured that I feel a little weird about getting the Purple Heart."

"When soldiers go through something like that, it's usually best to put them right back to work," she said. "You don't want them to dwell on things. If they take time off, they'll become more afraid to go back out; [it] gives them too much time to think."

First Lt. Amy Clements, 24, of Littleton, Colo., the company's executive officer, faced similar perils as a platoon leader during the first stage of the unit's deployment. Each time they ventured outside the wire, threats loomed from possible sniper attacks, roadside bombs, ambushes, vehicle bombs and suicide bombers.

"I faced the same thing they [male soldiers] did for five to six days a week," she said. "You witness a lot of scary stuff you never want to see again. You hope nobody else has to face it, either."

"As a platoon leader, part of the burden you carry is trying to protect your soldiers — especially the younger ones — from seeing things like dead bodies. They are dramatic images. Stuff like that sticks with you, even the more senior soldiers. Eventually, it starts to get to everybody."

E-mail Vince Little at: lttittle@stripes.osd.mil

Age-old military woe gets modern twist when both spouses are serving in Iraq

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FALCON, Iraq — Three female Army officers in the 127th Military Police Company symbolize the struggles and sacrifices of dual-military couples around the globe in the U.S.-led war on terrorism.

Except for a few weeks here and there, Capt. Tristan Vasquez, 1st Lt. Amy Clements and 1st Lt. Sara Skinner have essentially been separated from their husbands — all infantrymen assigned to the 1st Armored Division at Fort Belvoir, Germany — for roughly two years.

"People are making sacrifices that no one ever sees," said Capt. Kevin Hanrahan, the 127th Military Police Company commander. "Not only are they taking part in combat, they're altering their lives by being separated from their husbands. These are true American patriots."

Skinner and her husband, 1st Lt. Bruce Skinner, both graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 2002, were in Iraq at the same time from June 2003 to March 2004 and found ways to visit each other.

"We had about two months together in Germany before I came back here in September," she said. "That's the only two months we've lived together in our marriage."

"But that's pretty normal right now. Lots of military couples are going through the same thing. A lot of people think it's impossible."

Skinner points to soldiers during World War II, who often endured years of separation from spouses.

"We have it a lot better than them. We've got e-mail, phones, regular mail," she added. "Our living conditions are lot better. Generations before us had it a lot worse and they made it through."

Married in March 2003 around the start of the Iraq war, Vasquez and husband, Jose, a first lieutenant, spent about two weeks together before he was sent to Camp Casey, South Korea. After military police training, she went to Hanau, Germany.



Army 1st Lt. Amy Clements lived with her husband, Adam, also a first lieutenant, for about four months before he deployed to Iraq.

Their paths crossed briefly last year during the 1st Armored Division's three-month extension in Iraq.

"It's coming up on our two-year anniversary, and we've lived together for about two months and three weeks total," Tristan Vasquez said. "The rest we've given to the Army."

Both are slated for a return to Iraq within the next year, and they've opted to stick with the military for the long haul.

"There's a better chance I'll see my husband here in Iraq than if I stay in Germany," she added. "I'll take the chance."

Clements and her husband, Adam, also a first lieutenant, both graduated from West Point in 2002. Both assigned to different bases in Germany, they lived together for about four months before he deployed to Iraq.

"Every time we see each other, it's like a honeymoon. I think we're on our eighth," she said.

But given the U.S. military's current climate, the three women certainly don't consider themselves unique.

"The three of us are not the only ones in dual-military marriages," Clements said. "There are a lot of them out there, and they face the same struggles and hardships."

"You just have to keep working for the times you do get to spend together."

—Vince Little

Clements

1st Lt. Amy Clements
127th Military Police Company

"I faced the same thing they [male soldiers] did for five to six days a week. You witness a lot of scary stuff you never want to see again."

Vasquez

Capt. Tristan Vasquez
127th Military Police Company

"We joke around all the time and say there are no women in combat. That's all right, though. We know what we do."

5 killed in 3 car bombings across Baghdad

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Three car bombs exploded in Baghdad, killing at least five people, police said, as Kurdish and Shiite leaders agreed to convene Iraq's new parliament on Wednesday, despite their apparent failure to iron out some wrinkles in their deal to form a coalition government.

A U.S. soldier was killed by a car bomb in Baghdad and another

er six were wounded, but the military did not say if it was one of the three attacks reported by Iraqi police and eyewitnesses — one of which had targeted an American military convoy.

The car bomb targeting a U.S. military convoy exploded on a road about 500 yards from the main avenue leading to Baghdad's international airport, police Capt. Thamer Talib said.

Four civilians were killed and seven were wounded, including

two police officers, he said. The explosion took place in the Amel neighborhood about six miles from the airport.

In a report unconfirmed by U.S. officials, witnesses said some U.S. troops also were wounded. When U.S. forces arrived on the scene to evacuate them, another car bomb exploded, wounding more troops. One Humvee was destroyed and two civilian cars were in flames, witnesses said.

A U.S. military spokesman said

he was checking into the report, but never replied.

Another suicide car bomb exploded in northeastern Baghdad, killing one child and wounding at least four people, including a police officer, police Col. Muhanad Sadoun said. The bomber was trying to hit a traffic police patrol but crashed into a tree, Sadoun said.

Separately, a U.S. Marine with the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force died Monday in Anbar, a troubled province that has been a

hotbed of guerrilla activity and includes the cities of Fallujah, Ramadi and Qaim, officials said Tuesday.

Also on Tuesday, Shiite officials said they failed to reach final agreement in talks with the Kurds and the country's Sunni Arab community. But those failures were not enough to prevent the 275-member National Assembly from convening.

Talks with Sunni Arabs focused on naming a parliament speaker for the 275-member National Assembly that is to convene for the first time since Jan. 30 elections. It remained unclear if they would present a candidate Wednesday.

"The Kurds want to make some amendments on the deal and we are going to finish soon, Thursday to be exact. We do not want to impose any name from our side regarding the post of the parliament speaker. We want the Sunnis to nominate some persons for this post, but till now they have not done this," alliance member Ali al-Dabagh told The Associated Press after talks with Sunni leaders.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Monday, at least 1,514 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,155 died as a result of hostile action, according to the Defense Department.

The figures include four military civilians.

The AP count is four higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Monday.

The British military has reported 86 deaths; Italy, 20; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 17; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, eight; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Kazakhstan and Latvia one death each.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ A soldier was killed by small-arms fire Friday in Mosul.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Army Spc. Nicholas E. Wilson, 21, Glendale, Ariz.; died Friday in a vehicle accident in Ramadi; assigned to the 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Casey, South Korea.

■ Army Staff Sgt. Donald D. Griffith, Jr., 29, Mechanicsville, Iowa; was killed Friday in Tal Afar; assigned to the 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, Fort Lewis, Wash.

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GAO: U.S. exaggerates number of trained Iraqis

BY MARK MAZZETTI

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — U.S. commanders and Bush administration officials are overstating the number of Iraqi security forces on duty, providing an inaccurate picture of the training mission that is the U.S. military's "exit strategy" in Iraq, a government audit agency reported Monday.

The Pentagon in its latest figures said 142,000 Iraqis had been trained as police and soldiers. But the Government Accountability Office said that figure included tens of thousands of Iraqi policemen who left

their jobs with no explanation.

The GAO also said the State Department six months ago ceased providing government auditors with information about the number of Iraqi troops issued flak vests, weapons and communications equipment.

The unreliability of the data coming from Baghdad makes it difficult to provide an accurate accounting of the billions of dollars the U.S. government is spending to train and equip Iraq's army and police force, a GAO official told a congressional committee Monday.

"Without reliable information, Congress

may find it difficult to judge how federal funds are achieving the goal of transferring security responsibilities to the Iraqis," Joseph A. Christoff, the GAO's director of international affairs and trade, told the House Government Reform subcommittee on international relations.

Although the Defense Department has conducted several internal evaluations of the U.S. training mission in Iraq, the GAO is the first government agency to challenge as inflated the figures the Pentagon uses to chart the progress of Iraqi troops.

Specifically, the GAO criticized the Pen-

tagon's decision to include in its totals of trained and equipped Iraqi troops "tens of thousands" of police officers absent without leave. The most recent Pentagon figures show nearly 82,000 Iraqis have gone through U.S. police training.

"If you are reporting AWOLs in your numbers, I think there's some inaccuracy in your reporting," Christoff said after the hearing.

The progress of the training mission has become a politically charged issue, with Democrats in Congress charging that the Bush administration is misrepresenting the number of trained Iraqis at work.

Italy sets withdrawal

ROME — Premier Silvio Berlusconi said Tuesday that Italy will start withdrawing its 3,000 troops in Iraq in September, Italian news agencies reported.

Withdrawing Italian troops "will depend on the capability of the Iraqi government to give itself security structures for acceptable security," the ANSA news agency quoted Berlusconi as saying.

Bulgaria pullout

SOFIA, Bulgaria — President Georgi Parvanov called Tuesday for a partial withdrawal of the country's troops from Iraq, but insisted that as a coalition partner Bulgaria should remain there until the end of the year.

Parvanov made his remarks a week after a Bulgarian soldier was killed by U.S. troops in Iraq, and he acknowledged that the incident had renewed public debate about a possible withdrawal.

GI awaits verdict

FORT HOOD, Texas — An Army lieutenant laughed when soldiers under his command threw an Iraqi civilian into the Tigris River, saying they had a bet with another platoon over who would do that first, a former soldier testified Tuesday at the officer's assault trial.

A military judge began deliberating the charge against Lt. Jack Saville after the one-hour court-martial.

Saville, who pleaded guilty Monday to charges involving two other Iraqis, did not give the order to throw the civilian into the river that day in December 2003 near Balad, but he knew his platoon sergeant had ordered the soldiers to detain a random Iraqi, former soldier Terry Bowman testified. The Iraqi survived.

Captain tried for abuse

FORT CARSON, Colorado — The trial of a U.S. soldier accused of assaulting Iraqi civilians began with a witness testifying the officer saw himself as a "sheik" or a "king" of the Iraqi desert town under his supervision.

Capt. Shawn L. Martin faces eight counts of assault and one count each of obstruction of justice and conduct unbecoming of an officer. Lt. Joseph Heyman testified Monday that after an Army vehicle was damaged by a bomb, he saw Martin point a gun at the head of an Iraqi detainee and shout, "What do you know about this? If you don't tell me, I swear I'll kill you."

From The Associated Press

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Supporters of gay marriage march down Market Street in San Francisco on Monday.

Gay marriage ruling foreshadows constitutional fight in California

The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — A judge has opened the way for California to follow Massachusetts in allowing same-sex couples to tie the knot, but both sides in the debate predicted a vigorous court fight first.

San Francisco County Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer ruled Monday that while withholding marriage licenses from gays

and lesbians has been the status quo, it constitutes discrimination the state can no longer justify.

"Simply put, same-sex marriage cannot be prohibited solely because California has always done so before," Kramer wrote.

Ushering out a social norm long considered sacred won't happen right away, however. Kramer's decision is stayed automatically for 60 days to allow time for appeals, and conservative groups that op-

pose same-sex marriages vowed to uphold California's one woman-one man marriage laws.

"For a single judge to rule there is no conceivable purpose for preserving marriage as one man and one woman is mind-boggling," said Liberty Counsel President Matthew Staver, whose group represents the Campaign for California Families, one of two organizations that joined the state's attorney general's office in defending California's existing laws.

Jackson accuser: Taunts led to lies

Classmates' acts forced denials

The Associated Press

SANTA MARIA, Calif. — Michael Jackson's accuser testified Tuesday that he told a school administrator the singer didn't molest him because schoolmates were "making fun of me" and he wanted them to stop.

The 15-year-old boy offered the testimony under questioning by District Attorney Tom Sneddon after Jackson attorney Thomas Mesereau Jr. concluded his lengthy cross-examination of the witness.

It was revealed during the cross-examination Monday that the boy had told Jeffrey Alpert, a dean at John Burroughs Middle School in Los Angeles, that nothing had happened to him during stays at Jackson's Neverland ranch.

The conversation was prompted by a TV documentary that showed Jackson with the boy and in which Jackson acknowledged sharing his bed with children, although he characterized the encounters as innocent and nonsexual.

The boy testified that when he returned from his last stay at Neverland in March 2003, schoolmates made fun of him, saying he had been "raped" by Jackson.

He said he got in several fights as a result and had to talk to Alpert, who asked him if he had been molested.

"I told him that it didn't happen," the boy said. "All the kids were already making fun of me at the school and I didn't want anyone to think it had really happened."

Atlanta courthouse shooting suspect appears before magistrate

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Surrounded by 19 officers in a cinder-block jail room, the suspect in a rampage that left a judge and three others dead before a magistrate Tuesday and was informed that authorities plan to charge him with murder.

Brian Nichols, his hands and ankles shackled, appeared before Cobb County Magistrate Judge Frank Cox on the same rape charge for which he was on trial Friday when he escaped from another courthouse.

Nichols spoke only once at the hearing, when Cox asked him if he had any questions.

"Not at this time," he said. Officers lined the walls of the room during Tuesday's hearing.

Authorities said Nichols was alone with a deputy Friday when he stole her gun and then shot to death the judge presiding over his rape case and two other people.

He also is accused of killing a federal

agent as he eluded police.

Security cameras had been rolling Friday morning as Nichols — a former college linebacker who had been found in court earlier in the week with two homemade knives in his shoes — overpowered deputy Cynthia Hall as the 5-foot-tall officer escorted him to his rape trial. No one was monitoring the cameras.

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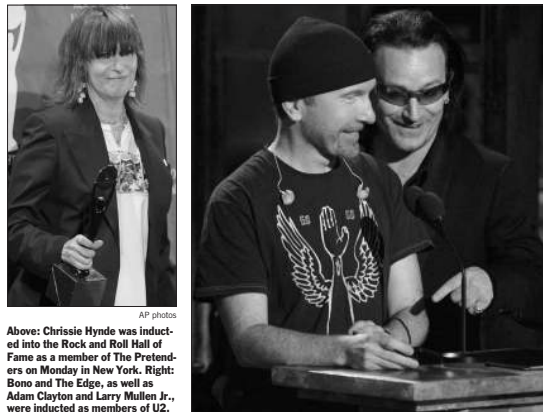
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AP photos

Above: Chrissie Hynde was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a member of The Pretenders on Monday in New York. Right: Bono and The Edge, as well as Adam Clayton and Larry Mullen Jr., were inducted as members of U2.

'The cream of the cake'

It's a beautiful day for U2, Buddy Guy and others as rock's hall of fame welcomes newest members

BY NEKESA MUMBI MOODY
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Minutes after U2 was officially bumped up to legendary status after a raucous, sentimental induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the Irish quartet headed to the media room to answer questions about their momentous honor.

But perhaps only a rock band fronted by Bono would first be asked about everything but music.

"Bono! ... What about the Nobel Peace Prize?" one reporter called out, querying as to whether Bono's mission to eradicate third-world debt would get him the honor.

"Rock star is already having the cream of the cake," Bono replied.

Over U2's 30-year journey from the streets of Dublin to becoming one of the world's most important rock bands, there have often been times when Bono's charisma, his charitable and business efforts have eclipsed his collaborators and lifelong friends: U2's other members, guitarist The Edge, bassist Adam Clayton and drummer Larry Mullen Jr.

But on Monday evening, if not always clear to others, their rock peers recognized the collaborative achievements of perhaps the most groundbreaking rock group in the past two decades.

"Ono, dos, tres, catorce," said Bruce Springsteen, quoting the Spanish countdown in U2's recent hit "Vertigo," as he inducted the band into the hall of fame with a loving, humorous tribute.

"The translation is one, two, three, fourteen. That is the correct math for rock 'n' roll. The whole had

better equal a lot more than the sum of its parts — or else you're just rubbing two sticks together."

On a night when The Pretenders, The O'Jays, Percy Sledge and blues legend Buddy Guy received key to rock's exclusive club, U2 was clearly the evening's star attraction.

But they were hardly the evening's only highlight. The O'Jays are best known for their work with Philly soul producers Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff. "Back Stabbers" was a big hit in 1972, with "Love Train" and "For the Love of Money" other well-known songs.

The Pretenders came from the same rock generation as U2. Ohio native Chrissie Hynde was a tough but tender role model for women, singing "Brass in Pocket," "Precious" and "Back on the Chain Gang."

"They went through all the heartache that rock 'n' roll is built on — they lost two band members and they never gave up," said Neil Young, who inducted the band and sat in for a ferocious performance of "My City Was Gone."

Guy dominated the Chicago blues guitar scene, and he was ushered into the hall by some pretty decent guitar players themselves — Eric Clapton and B.B. King. Later, both joined Guy onstage for a rousing rendition of "Let Me Love You Baby."

Frank Barsalona, credited with creating the first big rock 'n' roll booking agency, and Sire Records founder Seymour Stein were inducted in the nonperformer category.

Musicians, industry professionals and journalists vote on the inductees. Hall of fame members are permanently enshrined in Cleveland's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.



Legendary blues performer Buddy Guy, center, stands with B.B. King and Eric Clapton after performing during the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony. Backstage, Guy noted that few black blues musicians have been able to enjoy the success he has had in their lifetimes. "My mother told me before she died ... if you've got any flowers, give 'em to me now, so I can smell 'em. So I'll give this to me tonight, I can smell this, man!"

Clinton heads home after minor surgery

BY DINO HAZELL
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Former President Clinton left the hospital after minor surgery, saying he was "very grateful" to his medical team and "deeply" appreciated the thousands of get-well messages sent to him.

"I'm glad to be home and look forward to getting back to work within the next month or so," Clinton said in a statement issued Monday by his spokesman, Jim Kennedy.

The 42nd president's recovery was proceeding normally, and he has begun walking each day, Kennedy said. He is expected to remain at home in Chappaqua, about 40 miles north of Manhattan, for the next four to six weeks. Clinton underwent surgery last week to remove scar tissue and fluid around his left lung. His medical problem developed after his heart bypass surgery six months ago.

Doctors described the operation as a low-risk procedure to relieve a problem that crops up in only a fraction of 1 percent of bypass cases. They said the combination of fluid and scar tissue had reduced Clinton's left lung capacity by 25 percent.

Surgeons removed a rind of scar tissue nearly a third of an inch thick in some places. The doctors had said Clinton would be hospitalized for three to 10 days; he was released after four.

Nearly 10,000 people have sent get-well messages to Clinton through his foundation's Web site. "Get well soon so you can be up and around to continue your wonderful contributions to this world!" said one.

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton accompanied her husband to their upstairs home. A motorcade of SUVs was seen leaving New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center shortly after 5 p.m.

FCC: ABC's football stunt wasn't indecent

BY JUBE SHIVER JR.
Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — Indecency critics were thrown for a loss by federal regulators Monday over their complaints about ABC's racy "Monday Night Football" skit in November featuring actress Nicollette Sheridan and football star Terrell Owens.

The Federal Communications Commission concluded "the episode was not sufficiently explicit or graphic to be deemed indecent."

The segment, aired before the Philadelphia Eagles-Dallas Cowboys game, began with Eagles wide receiver Owens in a locker room with "Desperate Housewives" star Sheridan dressed in only a towel.

Sheridan coyly asked Owens to skip the upcoming game. When he declined, she dropped the towel and was shown from the behind from the waist up.

Monday's ruling was the fifth

time in two weeks that the FCC rejected viewer complaints of televised indecency.

On Feb. 28, the FCC ruled that ABC's telecast of Steven Spielberg's acclaimed World War II movie, "Saving Private Ryan," did not violate graphic indecency standards even though the film contained profanity and violence. The FCC also dismissed complaints against NBC's "Will and Grace," Fox's "Arrested Development" and WB's "Angel" drama.

The Traditional Values Coalition in Anaheim, Calif., was among the groups filing a complaint. The coalition declined to comment.

Other groups that criticized the "Monday Night Football" skit said it was just the latest example of the TV industry pushing too far in lacing shows with sex, violence and graphic language. They said Monday's ruling they were not surprised by the FCC action.

Kweisi Mfume announces run for Md. Senate seat

BALTIMORE — Maryland's U.S. Senate race still is 20 months away. But the race is on.

On Monday, three days after Sen. Paul Sarbanes announced he won't seek a sixth term, former NAACP president Kweisi Mfume launched a bid to take over the seat.

"I don't want to play games and say I'm going to put a team together to look at this," Mfume said at a news conference. "I hope this early statement says to people I'm very serious about this. I'm in this for the long haul."

If elected, Mfume would become the first black U.S. senator in Maryland history and only the sixth in U.S. history.

Mfume, a former five-term U.S. congressman who stepped down to become president of the NAACP, is the first in a potentially crowded field of Democratic candidates to step forward and officially declare his intentions.

The 56-year-old Baltimore native and former radio talk show host wanted for ally Sarbanes to decide whether to stay or go. Sarbanes, 72, is the longest-serving senator in state history.

From The Associated Press



Mfume

IN THE WORLD



Bodyguards of Kosovo's president stand beside the damaged vehicle carrying President Ibrahim Rugova after a failed assassination attempt in Kosovo's capital, Pristina, on Tuesday.

Kosovo's president survives bombing

BY FISNIK ABRASHI
The Associated Press

PRISTINA, Serbia-Montenegro — Kosovo President Ibrahim Rugova survived an apparent assassination attempt Tuesday after a bomb exploded as his convoy passed through central Pristina. At least one person was injured by flying glass, police spokeswoman Sabrije Kamberi said. Rugova, who was apparently unhurt, had been heading to a nearby government building for a meeting with the European Union's foreign policy chief, Javier Solana, when the explosion occurred. No one has claimed responsibility.

Rugova's car was damaged, and the president was seen being transferred to another car and being driven away after the explosion. "Thank God I survived again," Rugova said, appearing calm before his meeting with Solana. "Unfortunately, there are still elements which want to destabilize Kosovo."

Last year, a hand grenade was hurled at Rugova's residence from a passing vehicle. The grenade exploded in the garden without causing any injuries, and no one was ever arrested in connection with the attack.

A police officer at the scene of Tuesday's explosion said in condition of anonymity that the blast appeared to have been caused by a remote-controlled explosive device. The windows of nearby shops were shattered and a small metal garbage bin at the roadside, in which the bomb apparently had been placed, was shredded by the blast.

NATO-led peacekeepers used a robot to sift through other garbage bins, checking for more possible bombs.

Last Friday, a small explosion possibly caused by a hand grenade occurred near the United Nations' headquarters in Kosovo, injuring one person.

The top U.N. official in the province, Soren Jessen-Petersen, "strongly condemned the explosive attack against President Rugova's convoy."

The attack on Rugova is "an unacceptable act of terrorism," said Terry Davis, chairman of the Council of Europe, the continent's top human rights watchdog.

The ethnic Albanian Rugova, a pacifist leader, was elected Kosovo's president in 2002 and re-elected last December.

pect snatching a guard's weapon and quickly turned into a prolonged standoff with at least 10 of the group's top suspects leading the rebellious inmates.

Three guards and 24 inmates died — 22 in Tuesday's assault to take back the prison. A police officer also was killed, his body discovered under debris hours after the operation ended.

Sweat-soaked police marksmen filed out of the building after the assault to the applause of bystanders, escorting prisoners stripped to their underwear and with hands clasped behind their heads.

"The terrorists got what was coming to

Ringleader of U.S. Embassy bombing plot gets 10 years

BY PIERRE-ANTOINE SOUCHARD
The Associated Press

PARIS — A French court on Tuesday gave the maximum 10-year prison sentence to the ringleader of an alleged plot to send a suicide bomber into the U.S. Embassy in Paris. The court also sentenced five other defendants in the case to prison terms of between one and nine years.

The group's ringleader, Djamel Beghal, 39, and the others were convicted of "criminal association in relation with a terrorist enterprise," a broad accusation commonly used in terrorism cases in France that allowed for a maximum 10-year sentence.

The defendants all denied any connection to a terrorist plot, and Beghal testified that his confession of a plan to send a suicide bomber into the U.S. Embassy was obtained under torture after his July 2001 arrest in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. He was extradited to France two months later and retracted that confession.

Lawyers for Beghal and Lamel Daoudi, the other leading defendant, said they would file appeals.

The investigation opened Sept. 10, 2001 — a day before the al-Qaida terror attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

No solid evidence of a plot was presented at the trial, leaving the three judges to untangle a trail of

phone calls, meetings with suspect acquaintances and trips.

Prosecutors claimed the plot was concocted in Afghanistan with leading al-Qaida lieutenant Abu Zubaydah, who was captured in March 2002. At his trial, Beghal denied ever meeting the Saudi-born Palestinian, said to be a link between Osama bin Laden and many of al-Qaida's operational cells.

In Dubai, Beghal supposedly told Dubai authorities of a plot to target U.S. interests in France and identified a Tunisian accomplice, former professional soccer player Nizar Trabelsi, who was to enter the U.S. Embassy wearing a bomb belt.

Beghal said the confession was extracted through torture that he claimed included inserting instruments such as knitting needles into his genitals.

Trabelsi was convicted in Belgium in September 2003 after admitting to plans to drive a car bomb into a Belgian air base where U.S. nuclear weapons are believed stored.

Daoudi, 30, received nine years in prison. Nabil Bounour and Abdelkrim Lefkir, both 34, were given six-year prison terms. Bounour, of Algerian origin, was also forbidden to return to France once his sentence was served.

Rachid Benmessal received a three-year prison term, while Johan Bonte, Beghal's brother-in-law, was sentenced to a year behind bars.

G5 nations agree to share terror info

BY CIARAN GILES
The Associated Press

GRANADA, Spain — Interior ministers from five major European powers agreed Tuesday on ways to speed the exchange of information on terror suspects, monitor the Internet's use by terrorists and criminals and tip each other off when weapons or explosives are stolen.

At the sixth meeting of the informal group set up in 2003, ministers from Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain also agreed to increase cooperation on the exchange of data on fingerprints, DNA, criminal records, missing people, unidentified bodies and stolen vehicles.

"The objective is to make sure that the police forces of the Group of Five countries will have immediate access to the information that they need and which other members possess," the ministers said in a statement wrapping up their two-day meeting.

Spanish minister Jose Antonio



British Home Secretary Charles Clarke, center, speaks Tuesday with Giuseppe Pisanu of Italy in Granada, Spain, where G5 interior ministers agreed to set up a network of contact groups to exchange information on international terrorism.

Alonso said, "No country will be able to refuse to give another one any information required."

Alonso said the exchange of information on terror suspects concerned "people for which we have a rational suspicion that

they were involved in terrorist activities, people who have been trained in al-Qaida camps and people who need to be watched very carefully."

"We need to know who those people are," he said.

Abu Sayyaf among 28 dead in Philippine prison uprising

BY OLIVER TEVES
The Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines braced for retaliatory attacks after some of the country's most hardened terror suspects were killed in a failed prison uprising that left 28 people dead, most of them inmates killed in a barrage.

The dead included three leaders and a fourth member of the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf, a group notorious for deadly attacks and ransom kidnappings in which hostages have been beheaded.

The crisis began with an Abu Sayyaf sus-

pect snatching a guard's weapon and quickly turned into a prolonged standoff with at least 10 of the group's top suspects leading the rebellious inmates.

Three guards and 24 inmates died — 22 in Tuesday's assault to take back the prison. A police officer also was killed, his body discovered under debris hours after the operation ended.

Sweat-soaked police marksmen filed out of the building after the assault to the applause of bystanders, escorting prisoners stripped to their underwear and with hands clasped behind their heads.

"The terrorists got what was coming to

them," Ignacio Bunye, press secretary for President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, said in a statement. "The crisis team gave them all the chances to peacefully surrender."

The raid began after authorities gave the inmates a 15-minute deadline to surrender an ultimatum that came after hours of fruitless negotiations. Six officers were wounded in the assault, which saw some detainees scale down walls inside the compound as thick smoke billowed out.

The inmates had agreed to surrender after their failed jailbreak Monday, but the deal broke down when they demanded food first, prompting civilian negotiators to

leave in frustration.

The bloody assault raised fears of retaliatory attacks. Even as Arroyo congratulated police, an Abu Sayyaf leader warned of repercussions.

"To you people, you don't have to bring the war to Mindanao," Abu Sulaiman told DZBB radio, referring to the Muslim homeland in the south where the military has launched offensives against militants. "We will bring it right against your doorstep."

The inmates had warned of bombings if there was an assault on the jail. No one doubted that the Abu Sayyaf has the means and will power to carry them out.

Two pedestrians walk Sunday in front of a poster with a portrait of a top war crimes suspect, Gen. Ante Gotovina, in Knin, Croatia. If Gotovina is not arrested by Wednesday, the EU has threatened to postpone membership talks with Croatia.

AP



Membership in jeopardy

War crimes suspect may hinder Croatia's talks with EU

BY EUGENE BRICIC
The Associated Press

PAKOSTANE, Croatia — Nebojsa Perica is halfway through peeling a portrait of a top war crimes suspect from a street pole when a gust of wind tears it

free and sends him in a clumsy dash to gather it up.

Efforts to remove signs of support for retired Gen. Ante Gotovina in his southern, coastal hometown have taken on an urgency akin to that of the government's bid to capture him.

If Gotovina is not arrested and surrendered to the UN war crimes tribunal by Wednesday, the European Union has threatened it will postpone membership negotiations with Croatia.

The government claims that it cannot catch Gotovina as he is not on Croat soil. Police said last week that they have combed the entire country, checking more than 2000 people, homes and other property without any clues to his whereabouts.

Not everybody is convinced.

UN Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte, who is reportedly fed by foreign intelligence data, recently claimed that Zagreb was reluctant to track down the former French Legionnaire and that "structures within the government" have helped to shelter him.

The impasse has divided Europe into two camps ahead of the decision on whether to open membership talks as planned on Thursday.

A group led by Britain and Scandinavian countries maintains that negotiations should be delayed until Gotovina is caught. The other side, led by Austria and Croatia's neighbors, maintain that talks should start as envisioned as the country has done its utmost to cooperate.

A single veto on Wednesday will be enough to scuttle the planned talks.

Pakistan president: Forces were close to taking Bin Laden

The Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Pakistani security forces came close to capturing Osama bin Laden in an operation about eight to 10 months ago, but the terror mastermind eluded arrest and his trail has since gone cold, Pakistan's president said Tuesday.

Though President Gen. Pervez Musharraf did not say where the operation took place, the comment was the first official indication that bin Laden has recently been in Pakistan. Intelligence officials have said they believe he is hiding in the rugged mountains that straddle the border with Afghanistan.

"There was a time when the dragnet had closed and we thought we knew roughly the area where he possibly could be," Musharraf said.

"That was, I think, some time back ... maybe about eight to 10

months back," he said, adding: "But after this, this is such a game, this intelligence, that they escape. They can move and then you lose contact."

Musharraf and other Pakistani leaders say the silence is a sign they have destroyed al-Qaida's network here.

Pakistan is a key ally of the United States in its war on terror. Its security forces have captured more than 700 terror suspects, including some key al-Qaida operatives.

Bin Laden was last seen in a video released just before the U.S. elections in November. The video was dropped off at the Islamabad office of the Arabic news channel al-Jazeera, though there was no indication from the tape where Osama was when he recorded it.

In the 18-minute videotape, Bin Laden threatened fresh attacks on the United States.



AP

An anti-American demonstrator wears a Lebanese flag around his face while dancing around burning anti-American placards during a protest near the U.S. Embassy in Aukar, Lebanon.

Protesters in Lebanon march on U.S. Embassy

The Associated Press

BEIRUT, Lebanon — About 2,000 pro-Syria demonstrators denouncing what they said was American interference in Lebanon marched toward the U.S. Embassy in a Beirut suburb Tuesday, and scores of riot police and soldiers used barbed wire to block the approaches to the compound.

The protesters, waving Lebanese flags and chanting, "Ambassador get out! Leave my country free!" stopped at the barbed wire blocking the road about 500 yards from the fortified hilltop compound. The crowd did not try to break through.

A day earlier, hundreds of thousands of people gathered in the capital in the largest anti-Syrian protests yet since international pressure on Damascus to withdraw its troops has intensified.

Pro-Syrian groups have blamed the United States for pressuring Syria into deciding to withdraw its 14,000 troops from Lebanon.

They also reject a U.S.-sponsored UN Security Council resolution demanding that Syria withdraw and dismantle militias, a reference to the militant Shiite Muslim group Hezbollah.

In Washington, President Bush left open the possibility that the militant Shiite Muslim group Hezbollah could be part of the political mainstream in Lebanon despite its terrorist past.

"We view Hezbollah as a terrorist organization," Bush said after an Oval Office meeting with Jordan's King Abdullah. "I would hope that Hezbollah would prove that they are not by laying down arms and not threatening peace."

Hezbollah has been involved in Lebanese politics for over a decade, with an extensive social welfare program and nine lawmakers in parliament. But it has steered away from major decision-making in national politics as its guerrilla army focused on fighting Israel. Lebanon considers Hezbollah a legitimate resistance movement that led the guerrilla war against Israel's 18-year occupation of southern Lebanon.

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OPINION

In an era of the superpower, we're all safer

BY ARTHUR HERMAN

Terrorists swarm into Iraq. North Korea plays nuclear blackmail. Syria and Iran hold hands in public; crowds fill Beirut's streets; the shooting of an Italian journalist provokes outrage across Europe. Is this a world being made safe for democracy or a world on the brink? Some, especially Europeans, say the latter, arguing that this is what happens when the planet is stuck with just one superpower. Echoing France's Jacques Chirac, they yearn for a more "multipolar world," where an all-powerful United States can't play the bully.

Nonsense. The fact is, a unipolar world is a safer world and has been historically. For more than 100 years, from the defeat of Napoleon to the start of World War I, Britain was the world's lone superpower. Its Royal Navy enabled it to do the heavy lifting across the globe that no one else could or would, just as the U.S. military does today. Despite an inevitable crisis or two, the world enjoyed unprecedented peace, prosperity and stability. Now, with so many worrying about the United States dominating the world, it's worth looking at the lessons Britain learned in its years as lone superpower.

Be prepared to make enemies. "How glorious is the title of

'Englishman,'" wrote a Victorian-era Royal Navy officer after the mere presence of his ship off the coast of Italy ended riots in Rome and other cities, "and yet we are not loved." Don't expect to be. The world's other powers will never be happy about the global order you impose. Few will dare to challenge you overtly, but they will scheme behind your back.

For decades after Napoleon's defeat, Britain fought to tug the world in a new, progressive direction. Britain's support of national self-determination in South America and southern Europe often put it at odds with Spain and Russia. France, which Britain had saved from dismemberment at the Vienna peace congress in 1815, plotted to reverse Britain's naval supremacy. Yet that supremacy protected France's business interests around the world. It also preserved a balance of power in Europe, which allowed France to resist a German push until World War I. As Iraq shows, in power politics no good deed goes unpunished.

Be prepared for the long haul. Britain's first step in creating a new world order in 1815 was declaring war on the Atlantic slave trade — akin to today's war on terror. It put together a coalition of the bribed and coerced just to get a final treaty (Spain and Portugal re-

fused to sign unless they were paid off). Nations that still had slaves dragged their feet, especially the United States. For more than 40 years, the Royal Navy fought to plug the outflow of slaves from Africa amid daunting obstacles. Successive British governments persisted out of a sense of moral duty.

This arduous effort, which many dismissed as a failure for decades, finally paid off, and by 1870 one of the worst scourges of European domination of the planet had come to an end. In world leadership, persistence pays.

Your best ambassador is your military. For more than a century, the Royal Navy was not only the instrument of the Pax Britannica but its reassuring symbol. Wherever its ships anchored, travelers, merchants and journalists of every nationality felt safe. Royal Navy captains became the modern equivalent of knights in shining armor.

Today, the men and women of the U.S. armed services fill the same role. Look at their essential role in providing relief to tsunami victims (just the kind of job the Royal Navy did for a century) in full view of the Muslim world. Isolated incidents such as Abu Ghraib do not change the fact that U.S. troops make up the best military force in history. Let them be the face of the Pax Americana, in



Supporters of Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, Pakistan's six-party religious alliance, chant slogans against America during a rally last week in Islamabad. Thousands gathered to condemn President Gen. Pervez Musharraf's government and his association with the United States.

peace and in wartime.

Finally, **watch your back.** Expect challenges to arise, those who will envy your power and look for opportunities to overtake you.

After World War I, British politicians tried to save money by slashing the size of the fleet. It was the crucial mistake of the 20th century. In the power vacuum Britain left in the Pacific, slipped imperial Japan; in the Mediterranean, in slipped Mussolini's Italy; in Western and Central Europe, Hitler's Third Reich. It would take Pearl

Harbor to awaken the giant that would eventually take Britain's place as the world's policeman, the United States.

The only thing worse than a world with a lone superpower is one without a lone superpower. Despite its protestations, the world knows that — and that in a crisis, it's the Americans, and only the Americans, who will save the day.

Arthur Herman is the author, most recently, of "To Rule the Waves: How the British Navy Shaped the Modern World." This column first appeared in the Los Angeles Times.

Iceland cool to idea of diminished use of its language

BY WILLIAM ECENBARGER

I hand the agent my *brottfjarspild*, step on board Icelandair Flight 641. Just before takeoff, the flight attendant stands before us clapping a seat-belt buckle and droning through the *öruggisbundar um bord*. Some five hours later, we begin our descent into Reykjavik. At the airport, I get my passport stamped at *vagabatafirflir*, make a quick refresher stop in the *smeyringir*, exchange dollars for kronurs at the *guldveitur* and pick up tourist information at the *upplýsingagjafustofu fyrir ferðafolk*.

I have come to this nation of 280,000 inhabitants, who speak to each other in a language that is incomprehensible to 19,999 of every 20,000 people on Earth, to see how they are holding up against the onslaught of English. Iceland's linguistic patriots go to incredible lengths to preserve their language. Foreigners are ruthlessly screened out by a special agency, which also invents words for new things and ideas.

Icelanders have a strong belief in their own national greatness, and that conviction is rooted unshakably in language and words. Literacy isn't a problem here; it's a given. Icelanders believe that men and women should turn a verse as easily as they turn a profit, and both endeavors are considered integral to one's well-being.

Iceland has more bookstores per capita than any other nation in the world ("better shoeless than bookless" is an unofficial national motto). The most important tomes are the sagas. Written in the 12th and 13th centuries, these are the great prose narratives of medieval Iceland, bloodthirsty tales of Viking derring-do. Icelandic schoolchildren read their national literature exactly as it was written hundreds of years ago. Most Icelanders speak virtually the same language as their forefathers of the 10th century. Tomorrow morning's Reykjavik newspa-

pers will be written in the same language as the ancient sagas — that would be like this newspaper using Chaucerian English.

Language preservation worked nicely for centuries because Icelanders lived in diaphanous apart from the rest of the world, but in recent decades the cultural floodgates have been opened. English is everywhere — on televisions, VCRs, the Internet and commercial products.

It's part of a global problem: About 400 million people speak English as their first language, an additional 700 million or so use it as a second language and a billion people more are struggling to learn how to speak it. Meanwhile, other languages are disappearing at the rate of two per month. There are about 6,800 languages in the world, but the expert consensus is that 400 of them will soon be extinct.

Why care? "When you lose a language," the late linguistics professor Kenneth Hale once said, "you lose a culture, intellectual

wealth, a work of art. It's like dropping a bomb on a museum."

The front line of Iceland's preservation battle is in Reykjavik, the home of the Icelandic Language Institute (*Íslensk Málstöð*); this government agency was set up in 1994 to devise new words when existing language proves inadequate. When AIDS first came to national attention in Iceland, the main discussion was what to call it rather than how to prevent it. The institute does not believe that AIDS should be called AIDS, and thus the disease is officially known as *álíðsmali*, an ancient Icelandic word meaning "totally vulnerable," which the institute settled on after some three years of study.

The preservationists often resurrect words from the sagas. A computer is called *tolva*, a fusion of the old Icelandic words for number and prophetic, and a TV screen is a *skjár*, a sheep's placenta once used by farmers as window panes. My favorite is *fríþingur*, the word for pager, which means "time of peace."

I left Iceland pessimistic. Everywhere I went, I heard English spoken. Though a written language can be purged of foreign words and phrases, policing how people speak is another matter. Many young Icelanders cannot be bothered with a language that is a minefield of subjunctive, inflections and gender (the number 2 has three genders).

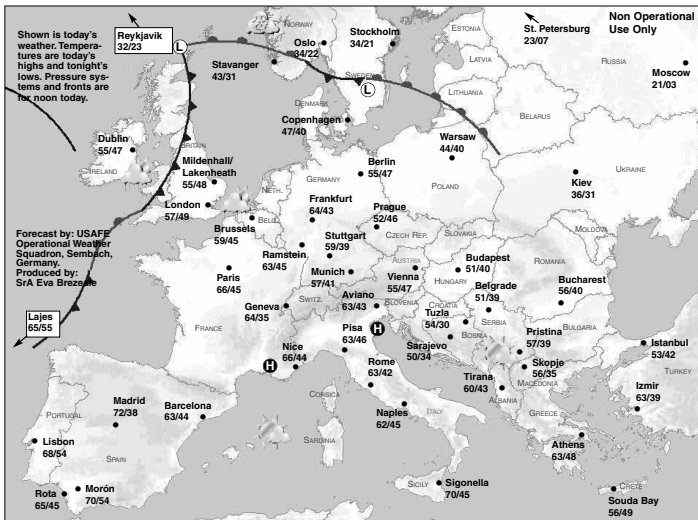
In one sense, the Icelanders have no one to blame but themselves. Just as they have earnestly defended their language, they have with equal enthusiasm made sure that every schoolchild has a computer and learns English. Thus Microsoft sees no need to translate Windows into Icelandic. The publishers of popular books are beginning to skip translation as well. It's what the Icelandic language purists call a *sjálfsheila* — a Catch-22. I fear the handwriting is on the wall — and it is in English.

William Ecenbarger was a longtime reporter at The Philadelphia Inquirer. This column first appeared in the Los Angeles Times.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY





AFRICA

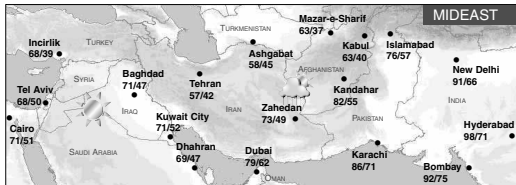
Cape Town	HI 80	LO 72	Mogadishu	HI 80	LO 72
Dakar	HI 80	LO 72	Nairobi	HI 80	LO 72
Freetown	HI 80	LO 72	Rabat	HI 80	LO 72
Harare	HI 80	LO 72	Tripoli	HI 80	LO 72

THE WORLD

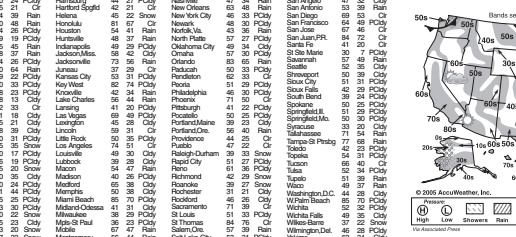
Amsterdam	HI 51	LO 45	Manila	HI 87	LO 75
Batman	HI 51	LO 45	Mexico City	HI 87	LO 75
Beijing	HI 51	LO 45	Montreal	HI 87	LO 75
Bombay	HI 87	LO 75	Panama	HI 87	LO 75
Buenos Aires	HI 87	LO 75	Paris	HI 87	LO 75
Calcutta	HI 87	LO 75	Rio de Janeiro	HI 87	LO 75
Chennai	HI 87	LO 75	Sao Paulo	HI 87	LO 75
Colombo	HI 87	LO 75	Singapore	HI 87	LO 75
Dhaka	HI 87	LO 75	Tokyo	HI 87	LO 75
Hong Kong	HI 87	LO 75			
London	HI 87	LO 75			

TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

Alabama	HI 80	LO 72	Colorado	HI 80	LO 72
Alaska	HI 80	LO 72	Connecticut	HI 80	LO 72
Arizona	HI 80	LO 72	Delaware	HI 80	LO 72
Arkansas	HI 80	LO 72	District of Columbia	HI 80	LO 72
California	HI 80	LO 72	Florida	HI 80	LO 72
Colorado	HI 80	LO 72	Georgia	HI 80	LO 72
Connecticut	HI 80	LO 72	Hawaii	HI 80	LO 72
Delaware	HI 80	LO 72	Idaho	HI 80	LO 72
District of Columbia	HI 80	LO 72	Illinois	HI 80	LO 72
Florida	HI 80	LO 72	Indiana	HI 80	LO 72
Georgia	HI 80	LO 72	Iowa	HI 80	LO 72
Hawaii	HI 80	LO 72	Kansas	HI 80	LO 72
Idaho	HI 80	LO 72	Kentucky	HI 80	LO 72
Illinois	HI 80	LO 72	Louisiana	HI 80	LO 72
Indiana	HI 80	LO 72	Maine	HI 80	LO 72
Iowa	HI 80	LO 72	Maryland	HI 80	LO 72
Kansas	HI 80	LO 72	Massachusetts	HI 80	LO 72
Kentucky	HI 80	LO 72	Michigan	HI 80	LO 72
Louisiana	HI 80	LO 72	Minnesota	HI 80	LO 72
Maine	HI 80	LO 72	Mississippi	HI 80	LO 72
Maryland	HI 80	LO 72	Missouri	HI 80	LO 72
Massachusetts	HI 80	LO 72	Montana	HI 80	LO 72
Michigan	HI 80	LO 72	Nebraska	HI 80	LO 72
Minnesota	HI 80	LO 72	Nevada	HI 80	LO 72
Mississippi	HI 80	LO 72	New Hampshire	HI 80	LO 72
Missouri	HI 80	LO 72	New Jersey	HI 80	LO 72
Montana	HI 80	LO 72	New Mexico	HI 80	LO 72
Nebraska	HI 80	LO 72	New York	HI 80	LO 72
Nevada	HI 80	LO 72	North Carolina	HI 80	LO 72
New Hampshire	HI 80	LO 72	North Dakota	HI 80	LO 72
New Jersey	HI 80	LO 72	Ohio	HI 80	LO 72
New Mexico	HI 80	LO 72	Oklahoma	HI 80	LO 72
New York	HI 80	LO 72	Oregon	HI 80	LO 72
North Carolina	HI 80	LO 72	Pennsylvania	HI 80	LO 72
North Dakota	HI 80	LO 72	Rhode Island	HI 80	LO 72
Ohio	HI 80	LO 72	South Carolina	HI 80	LO 72
Oklahoma	HI 80	LO 72	South Dakota	HI 80	LO 72
Oregon	HI 80	LO 72	Tennessee	HI 80	LO 72
Pennsylvania	HI 80	LO 72	Texas	HI 80	LO 72
Rhode Island	HI 80	LO 72	Utah	HI 80	LO 72
South Carolina	HI 80	LO 72	Vermont	HI 80	LO 72
South Dakota	HI 80	LO 72	Virginia	HI 80	LO 72
Tennessee	HI 80	LO 72	Washington	HI 80	LO 72
Texas	HI 80	LO 72	West Virginia	HI 80	LO 72
Utah	HI 80	LO 72	Wisconsin	HI 80	LO 72
Vermont	HI 80	LO 72	Wyoming	HI 80	LO 72
Virginia	HI 80	LO 72			
Washington	HI 80	LO 72			
West Virginia	HI 80	LO 72			
Wisconsin	HI 80	LO 72			
Wyoming	HI 80	LO 72			



THE UNITED STATES TODAY



EUROPEAN FORECAST

Benelux: Mostly cloudy with rain showers. High in the lower 50s to lower 60s. Thursday lows in the mid to upper 40s.

Britain, Ireland: Mostly cloudy with rain showers. High in the mid to upper 50s. Thursday lows in the upper 40s.

Croatia and Bosnia: Partly cloudy with morning fog. High in the mid to lower 50s. Thursday lows in the mid to upper 40s.

France: Partly cloudy with morning rain showers in the north. High in the mid-60s. Thursday lows in the mid-40s.

Northern Germany: Mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers. High in the mid-50s to lower 60s. Thursday lows in the 40s.

Southern Germany: Partly cloudy. High in the upper 50s to lower 60s. Thursday lows in the upper 30s to mid-40s.

Hungary: Partly to mostly cloudy. High in the lower 50s. Thursday lows in the lower 40s.

Northern Italy: Partly cloudy. High in the lower 60s. Thursday lows in the lower to mid-40s.

Southern Italy: Sunny. High in the lower 60s. Thursday lows in the 40s.

Kosovo: Partly cloudy. High in the mid to upper 50s. Thursday lows in the mid to upper 30s.

Norway: Cloudy with rain and snow showers. High in the mid-30s to lower 40s. Thursday lows in the lower 20s to lower 30s.

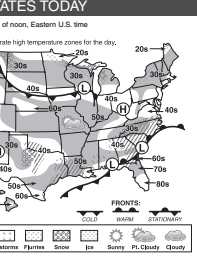
Portugal, Spain: Partly cloudy with morning fog. High in the lower 60s to lower 70s. Thursday lows in the mid-40s to mid-50s, mid-30s inland.

Turkey: Partly cloudy. High in the lower 50 to lower 60s, upper 60s to the south. Thursday lows in the upper 30s to lower 40s, upper 20s inland.

For current weather watches, warnings, and 5-day forecasts go to the USAF Operational Weather Squadron home page at <https://ows.smbach.af.mil>

SUN & MOON

Sunrise (Baghdad)	0613 A.M.	Tonorrow	0617 A.M.
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	0639 A.M.	0637 A.M.	
Sunset (Baghdad)	1811 P.M.	1811 P.M.	
Sunset (Frankfurt)	1831 P.M.	1832 P.M.	



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STARS & STRIPES
Your Hometown Newspaper

Smoking ban review

RI PROVIDENCE — The Health Department probably will take another look at how it interprets a new smoking ban, a department lobbyist said.

The ban temporarily exempts bars with fewer than 10 employees. The department has been counting as employees volunteers for groups such as the Knights of Columbus who don't serve alcohol.

Med school to upgrade

VA RICHMOND — Virginia Commonwealth University plans to hire more than 80 research faculty members over the next six years and spend millions on a laboratory building and other space.

Fifteen years ago, VCU ranked 34th among the country's 121 medical schools in its share of National Institutes of Health research dollars. The school's ranking slipped to 60th in 2003.

Mistrial in nurse case

TX SAN ANGELO — Already delayed several times, the capital murder trial of a nurse accused of killing 10 elderly patients was over almost before it began as a judge declared a mistrial.

About 15 minutes into opening statements, prosecutor Ralph Guerrero told jurors Monday that they would hear evidence against Vickie Dawn Jackson, but that no one — not even Jackson herself — may ever be able to provide a motive.

Defense attorney Bruce Martin interrupted Guerrero, objecting that the remark improperly indicated Jackson would testify. The defendant in a criminal case is not obligated to testify.

The judge granted a new trial, now set for March 29.

"These things happen. Some times there are procedural or other problems and you have to start all over," Martin said.

Jackson is accused of killing 10 patients, including her third husband's grandfather, by injecting them with a drug used to temporarily halt breathing. She could get life in prison if convicted.

Gov. to go door to door

WV CHARLESTON — Gov. Joe Manchin says he will go door to door this summer to encourage West Virginians to approve a \$5.5 billion bond sale.

Proceeds would be used to ease shortfalls in pension programs for teachers, State Police troopers and the judiciary. A special election is set for June 25.

Superintendent needed

MI LANSING — Applications to become Michigan's next K-12 schools superintendent are due April 8.

The State Board of Education set the deadline to replace Tom Watkins, who resigned under pressure Jan. 29.

Guy Jennifer Granholm doesn't have the power to hire or fire the schools chief, but she wanted Watkins gone after they feuded in public over his leadership skills.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Cold slows syrup flow

OH CHARDON — Maple syrup producers are worried a cold snap this week will cause another delay in maple sugaring season in northeast Ohio.

Maple trees were tapped for the sugar-laden sap when temperatures rose earlier this week, but the change in the weather could delay production for at least another week. Trees need warm days to stimulate sap flow.

Gold Rush plates end

AK ANCHORAGE — The Division of Motor Vehicles has stopped making Alaska's Gold Rush Centennial license plate.

The blue, white and yellow plates depict prospector horses who came to Alaska in the 1890s.

The plates began appearing on vehicles in 1998. Motorists needing new plates will have to settle for the standard blue-on-yellow version with the Alaska state flag.

Student hangs in video

GA SAVANNAH — A college student was seriously injured while acting out a hanging for a film project.

Daryl Goins and other students were making a movie for class at his home Saturday night. The script had been approved by a professor, but Goins, 20, allegedly decided to change the ending.

"There was a suicide scene at the end, and he changed the technique," Geoffrey Jowett, dean of

students for Savannah College of Art and Design, told the Savannah Morning News. "It was a hanging, an accident based on the stunt."

Details were sketchy, but during the scene Goins somehow hit his head. Jowett said other students gave him CPR. He was hospitalized in serious condition.

Police have the video and are investigating. The school is reviewing whether to pursue disciplinary action.

Goins was enrolled in an Introduction to Video class. Students at the college are required to take a safety course before filming, sign a contract confirming they have read all safety regulations and have scripts approved by a faculty member.

Wettest winter ever

NM ALBUQUERQUE — New Mexico experienced its wettest winter in recorded history, the National Climatic Data Center in North Carolina said.

The statewide average of 4.33 inches of precipitation during the winter from December through February is the most for the state since records began to be kept in 1896. It also was the eighth-warmest winter on record, the data center said.

Stolen truck 'hot' item

MA FALL RIVER — Police arrested a man who was driving a stolen vehicle that was "hot" in more ways than one — the pickup owned by Cardinal Health Nuclear Pharmacy Services contained radioactive material.

The pickup was reportedly stolen Tuesday while it was parked in Seekonk. It was later spotted by two police officers about 10 miles away in Fall River.

Fall River Sgt. Roger LaFleur said he and the other officer followed the truck cautiously because of its reportedly radioactive contents and slick road conditions. They took the driver into custody after the pickup stopped.

A city hazardous materials team that inspected the truck determined the five containers carrying suspected radioactive material had not been opened.

Freedom offered for sex

PA CARLEISLE — A police officer coerced three women into having sex with him by threatening to arrest them for prostitution if they refused, a prosecutor said.

Cpl. Kenny Johnson of the Middlesex Township, Cumberland County, police was on trial Monday on charges including rape, sexual assault and obstruction of justice.

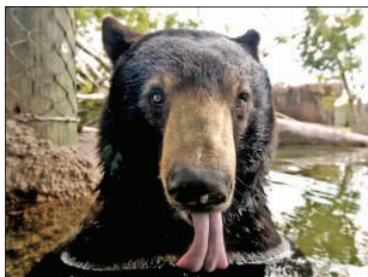
Johnson, 43, of North Middleton Township, was arrested in a sting operation in which a female probation officer posed as a prostitute. He was suspended without pay.

A Newville-area woman who said she was a prostitute at truck stops testified that over three years beginning in 1998, she had sex with Johnson in his police car, at the police station and at his home. Johnson told her she wouldn't get arrested when he was on duty, and had even driven her to a truck stop where she worked as a prostitute, she told the jury.



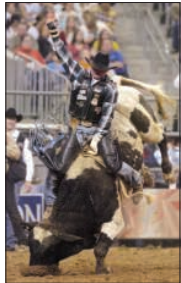
Irish tradition

Piper Phil Cormier of North Reading, Mass., a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, performs at a St. Patrick's Day parade in Clinton, Mass.



Up close and personal

One of two Maine black bears presses up against the glass in their compound at the Palm Beach Zoo in Florida. The zoo recently held its grand opening of the new black bear exhibit. The twin bears, named Lewis and Clark, are now 4 years old and weigh about 420 pounds. They came to the zoo when their mother was killed by a car when they were about 2 months old and weighing 13 pounds.



He's got a good grip

Jason Legler, of Pierce, Colo., rides a bull named Cat Daddy, during the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo in Houston.



See how easy it is

Scott McArthur, 14, of Elkins, W.Va., prepares to snowboard down a ramp of snow at the Capitol in Charleston, W.Va. The West Virginia Ski Area Association put on a snowboarding demonstration to promote the state's five alpine ski resorts.



Going up in flames An unidentified Pittsburg, Kan., firefighter battles flames engulfing a building in downtown Fort Scott, Kan. The Pittsburg department, located about 30 miles south of Fort Scott, was among several called in to assist in fighting the blaze, which consumed or heavily damaged at least six historic districts in the city's historic district. The building shown was built in 1890.



A five-letter word for winner c-h-a-m-p, Tyler Hinman, 20, of Troy, N.Y., works on the Division A championship crossword puzzle in Stamford, Conn., during the American Crossword Puzzle Tournament. Hinman, a junior at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, is the youngest winner of the national crossword puzzle championship.



Finding a dry seat Fernanda Sales, of Framingham, Mass., sits on the backrest of a bench partially covered in snow in front of stadium seating at Butterworth Park in Framingham, Mass. following a winter storm.

Keep pledge in English

MD MILLERSVILLE — A Maryland teen is protesting his school's decision to broadcast the Pledge of Allegiance in languages other than English during National Foreign Language Week. Patrick Linton, a ninth-grader at Old Mill High School in Millersville, said he and some other students sat down rather than stand when the pledge was read in Russian over the school's public address system. "This is America, and we got soldiers at war," said the 15-year-old. "When you're saying the pledge in a different language which nobody understands, that's not OK."

School system spokesman Jonathan Brice said the readings in Spanish, French, Latin, Russian and German were "just a way to connect what's going on in the classroom."

Charges for dog attack

VA SPOTSYLVANIA — A prosecutor said he will seek involuntary manslaughter charges against the owner of three pit bulls that fatally mauled an 82-year-old woman.

Attorney William Neely said he will ask Spotsylvania County grand jurors next week to indict Deanna Large, 36, in the death of Dorothy Sullivan, who was killed as she walked her dog in her Parlow yard.

Sullivan and her small dog, Buttons, were attacked and killed by three wandering pit bulls, all of which have since been killed.

Large admitted owning one of the dogs, but Neely said the ensuing investigation revealed that she owned all three and had been warned to keep them under better control.

Visitors bite snake lure

TX SWEETWATER — A Texas man says he was bitten by a rattlesnake while holding a snake lure. The man, who was holding a rattlesnake Round-Up leave with a range of memories, the most enduring perhaps being the odor of snakes.

"It stinks, especially when they're butchering them," said Scott Pardee, 16, of Abilene, as he looked into an area where men chopped off snakes' heads.

It's the smell of success to people such as Lynn Adams, executive director of the Sweetwater Chamber of Commerce.

Now in its 47th year, the round-up draws 30,000 people to Sweetwater with a population of about 11,500. Visitors "not only come to see the rattlesnakes but to spend money," Adams said with a smile.

The event, which continued through Monday, generates hundreds of thousands of dollars in economic impact, said Kati Bewley, a Sweetwater Jaycee.

Pickers chanted down

CO COLORADO SPRINGS — Ten members of a Topeka, Kan., church famous for its demonstrations against the gay community received a rude welcome when they picketed Palmer High School.

More than 500 people turned out with banners and chants to condemn the Westboro Baptist Church demonstrators as messengers of hatred, not Christian love.

On a public sidewalk, Westboro church members raised their anti-gay signs. Across the street, hundreds faced them shouting "No

more hate" and other chants.

N.J. promotes kindness

NJ TRENTON — A kinder, gentler New Jersey? In a state where one former governor once joked that the official bird was "the middle finger," Assemblymen Jon M. Bramnick and Gordon Johnson think a few more random acts of kindness couldn't hurt.

A resolution under consideration in the state Legislature is encouraging residents to join "a campaign toward civility, kindness and respect to all."

Last year, then-Gov. James E. McGreevey declared a Random Acts of Kindness Day.

Car sale while stumping

IA DES MOINES — He came to sell President Bush's plan to overhaul Social Security. Instead, U.S. Sen. Charles Grassley sold his beat-up old car.

The 1986 Olds Delta 88 sold for \$356 to an Iowa factory worker. The gray Oldsmobile, with 172,511 miles, paint peeling off the body and a Volkswagen hubcap on one wheel, was used in political advertisements last year during Grassley's re-election campaign.

The deal started last month at a town meeting, where Grassley was explaining Bush's Social Security plan. Roy Nelson, 41, was there with his four daughters. One of them stood up and asked him about the car because she was turning 16 within a month.

"Grassley told her that the book value was \$357," but today I'd sell it to you for \$356," Nelson said. "I looked at him and said, 'Sold.'"

Cheaper gas woes

NE GRAND ISLAND — Some customers may have thought it was simple justice. Also, it was technology that prevented a gas station's sign from displaying any price \$2 or higher.

Byron Wheeler, who owns a Byco gas station, said he kept prices below the \$2 mark for five days last week because the station's electronic sign couldn't display a "2" in the dollar position.

Wheeler said the company is upgrading the sign, which has been in place at the station's convenience store since the business opened in 1991. But until the sign can be brought up to its space, it is displaying only the time and temperature.

Observation deck coming

NY NEW YORK — A 70-story-high observation deck at Rockefeller Center will reopen this fall after a \$75 million renovation, the complex's co-owner said.

The deck, atop 30 Rockefeller Center, has been closed since 1986, when the Rainbow Room restaurant expanded into its space. It is expected to draw about two million visitors a year, according to Tishman Speyer Properties, co-owners of Rockefeller Center.

At 850 feet above street level, it will be the city's second-highest observatory (the highest is atop the Empire State Building, which is about 200 feet higher).

The observation deck atop the World Trade Center was the city's highest until the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Stories and photos from wire services

AFRTS Television Schedule

Updated program listings are available on the first scoreboard page in the sports section or AFRTS's Web site at <http://myaftr.dodmedia.osd.mil/>

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2005

(AFN-FAMILY)	(AFN-MOVIE)	(AFN-EUROPE)	(AFN-KOREA)	(AFN-NEWS)	(AFN-SPORTS)	(SPECTRUM)	(AFN-PACIFIC)
9:00 Stanley "Mockingbird" Scarf	Movie *** "Blue Moon" (1998) Drama: Sharon Lawrence. Intercal and external pressures strain a couple's marriage.	Dr. Phil	Jocquelyn	Hardball With Chris Matthews	Tennis Pacific Life Open - Day 5. From Indian Wells, Calif. (Taped)	30-Minute Meals	Jocquelyn
9:30 Stanley	Savage-Sameer Cat	(9-46) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor	Sensational Crime	Food 511	Headline News
10:00 Arthur "My Music Rules"	Reading Rainbow (E)	(38) Guiding Light	Advisory Block	Nightline	Fashion File	ESPIWes	Pacific Report
11:00 Stanley	(10-48) Movie *** "Marathon Man" (1976, Supernal) Dustin Hoffman, Laurence Olivier. Roy Schaefer.	(17) General Hospital	Arrested Development	Nightline	ESPIWes	The King of Queens	Arrested Development
11:30 Stanley	Viva The Explorer The beach	Judge Judy	The Leano	Fox and Friends First	NBA Basketball Minnesota Timberwolves at Dallas Mavericks. From American Airlines Center in Dallas. (Taped)	Charmed	Extreme Makeover Home Edition
12:00 The Wiggles	Movie *** "Beach Blanket Bingo" (1965, Comedy)	Two and a Half Men	The District "The Voice Inside"	AMERICAN MORNING	Strong Medicine	Girlfriends	Lost "All the Best Cowboys Have Daddy Issues"
13:00 Bob the Builder	Barney & Friends (E)	Sylvester & Tweety	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	FOX News	Any Day Now "Life"	Law & Order "Who Let the Dogs Out"	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno
13:30 Dragon Tales (E)	(15-50) Movie *** "Rush Hour" (1998) Jackie Chan.	Buzz Lightyear of Star	The Late Show With David Letterman	FOX News	Third Watch "Act Brave"	The Late Show With David Letterman	The Late Show With David Letterman
14:00 Blue's Clues	Inside the Actors Studio "Diane Lane" Diane Lane.	SpongeBob SquarePants	Headline News	FOX News	NASCAR Racing Nextel Cup Series - Unw-Damir Chrysler 401. From Las Vegas Motor Speedway in Las Vegas. (Taped)	The Simpsons	Countdown With Keith Olbermann
14:30 Barney & Friends (E)	Coming Attractions	Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Everybody Loves Raymond	The Simpsons	Countdown With Keith Olbermann
15:00 Funniest Home Videos	18:30 Kurgals	Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	The O.C. "Pilot"	Headline News
15:30 Growing Pains	19:00 Even Stevens "Thin Ice"	Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
16:00 Pokemon "Snack Attack"	20:00 Gilmore Girls "Dead Uncles and Vegetables"	Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
16:30 Yu-Gi-Oh! (Part 2 of 2)	20:30 Degra: Next	Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
17:00 Doug (E)	21:00 Degra: Next	Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
17:30 The Wild Thornberrys	22:00 The Cosby Show	Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
18:00 The Fairly OddParents	22:30 Home Improvement	Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
18:30 Kurgals	23:30 Touched by an Angel "A Swain's Prayer"	Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
19:00 Even Stevens "Thin Ice"		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
20:00 Gilmore Girls "Dead Uncles and Vegetables"		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
20:30 Degra: Next		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
21:00 Degra: Next		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
22:00 The Cosby Show		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
22:30 Home Improvement		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
23:00 Touched by an Angel "A Swain's Prayer"		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News
23:30		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News	Headline News	Headline News	Headline News

THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2005

00:00 Doug (E)	(11-06) Movie *** "Rush Hour" (1998) Jackie Chan.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
00:30 The Wild Thornberrys	00:30 The Fairly OddParents	Access Hollywood	Beer in the Big Blue House	NBC Nightly News	College Basketball NIT Tournament First Round - Teams TBA. (Live)	American Idol	Beer in the Big Blue House
1:00 Kurgals	(12-51) Movie *** "Pure Luck" (2001, Adventure) Brad Pitt. A country singer struggles with the burden of stardom.	Sports	Oobi	ABC World News Tonight	CBS Evening News	Oobi	West of Fortune
1:30 Kurgals	1:30 Even Stevens "Thin Ice"	College Basketball Teams to Be Announced. (Live)	West of Fortune	CBS Evening News	Dr. Phil	West of Fortune	Dr. Phil
2:00 Kanan & Kai "Fenced In"	3:00 Gilmore Girls "Dead Uncles and Vegetables"	ABC World News Now	Oprah Winfrey	Hannity & Colmes	NBA Basketball Minnesota Timberwolves at San Antonio Spurs. From the SBC Center in San Antonio. (Live)	The O.C. "Pilot"	Dr. Phil
3:00 Gilmore Girls "Dead Uncles and Vegetables"	3:30 Degra: Next	NBC Nightly News	Headline News	The Fox Report With Shepard Smith	Friends	Friends	NBC Nightly News
4:00 Degra: Next	4:30 Degra: Next	Judge Judy	Headline News	Law & Order "Who Let the Dogs Out"	Seinfeld "The Doll"	Judge Judy	Judge Judy
5:00 Sesame Street (E)	(15-50) Movie *** "Drop Dead Gorgeous" (1999) Kirsten Dunst. A Minnesota beauty queen competes for a coveted title.	ABC World News Now	Access Hollywood	Law & Order "Who Let the Dogs Out"	Breathingspace Yoga	Access Hollywood	Access Hollywood
5:30 Barney & Friends (E)	6:00 Barney & Friends (E)	CBS Evening News	(25) Guiding Light	Larry King Live	Caribbean Workout	(25) Guiding Light	(25) Guiding Light
6:30 Clifford the Big Red Dog (E)	7:00 Dragon Tales (E)	NBC Nightly News	(13) General Hospital	Nightline	Body Shopping	(13) General Hospital	(13) General Hospital
7:30 Bob the Builder	8:00 The Wiggles "Hairs"	Play With Me Sesame	Beer in the Big Blue House	Nightline	Typical Mary Ellen	Typical Mary Ellen	Legend of Tarzan
8:00 The Wiggles "Hairs"	8:30 The Fairly OddParents	Oobi	Rocko's Modern Life	BET Nightly News	NASCAR Nation	The View	Legend of Tarzan
8:30 The Fairly OddParents	9:00 Stanley	West of Fortune	NBA Inside Stuff	Ami Smiley	Emmerl Live	Emmerl Live	Ami Smiley
9:00 Stanley	9:30 Savage-Sameer Cat	Dr. Phil	Headline News	Hardball With Chris Matthews	30-Minute Meals	30-Minute Meals	30-Minute Meals
9:30 Savage-Sameer Cat	10:00 Franklin	(9-46) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor	Low Carb & Lovin' It	Headline News	Headline News
10:00 Reading Rainbow (E)	(145) Movie *** "Raging Bull" (1980, Biography) Robert De Niro. Cathy Moriarty. Overcoming study of former boxing champion Jake LaMotta.	(38) Guiding Light	Advisory Block	Nightline	Style Star	Style Star	Pacific Report
10:30 Stanley	11:00 Stanley	Two and a Half Men	Two and a Half Men	Nightline	ESPIWes	ESPIWes	ESPIWes
11:00 Stanley	11:30 Stanley	(17) General Hospital	NBA Inside Stuff	Nightline	The King of Queens	The King of Queens	The King of Queens
12:00 The Explorer	12:30 The Wiggles "Life"	Headline News	Alisa "Mia Cuba"	FOX and Friends First	NBA Basketball Seattle Sonnets at Detroit Pistons. From the Palace of Auburn Hills in Auburn Hills, Mich. (Taped)	Desperate Housewives "Suspicious Minds"	Desperate Housewives "Suspicious Minds"
13:00 Bob the Builder	13:30 Dragon Tales (E)	Judge Judy	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation "Viva Las Vegas"	AMERICAN MORNING	SportsCenter	Charmed "Brain Drain"	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation "Viva Las Vegas"
13:30 Dragon Tales (E)	14:00 Blue's Clues "Off to Party"	Play With Me Sesame	Beer in the Big Blue House	FOX News	FOX News	Strong Medicine	Pacific Report
14:00 Blue's Clues "Off to Party"	14:30 Barney & Friends (E)	Legend of Tarzan	Late Show With David Letterman	FOX News	FOX News	Any Day Now "Love Is Love"	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno
14:30 Barney & Friends (E)	15:00 Funniest Home Videos	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News	Third Watch "Sex, Lies & Videotape"	The Late Show With David Letterman
15:00 Funniest Home Videos	15:30 Growing Pains	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News	Law & Order "Armed Forces"	ESPIWes
15:30 Growing Pains	16:00 Pokemon	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News	The Simpsons	College Basketball Teams to Be Announced. (Live)
16:00 Pokemon	16:30 Yu-Gi-Oh! (Part 1 of 2)	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News	Everybody Loves Raymond	American Idol Wildcard performers are chosen.
16:30 Yu-Gi-Oh! (Part 1 of 2)	17:00 Doug (E)	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News	The Practice "Goodbye"	College Basketball Teams to Be Announced. (Live)
17:00 Doug (E)	17:30 The Wild Thornberrys	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News	48 Hours Mystery	College Basketball Teams to Be Announced. (Live)
18:00 The Fairly OddParents	18:30 Kurgals	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News	Friends	Good Morning America
19:00 That's So Raven	20:00 All That Music group: SLW	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News	Seinfeld "The Fria's Club"	Seinfeld "The Fria's Club"
20:00 All That Music group: SLW	20:30 7th Heaven "Charity Begins at Home"	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News	Daily Show-Jon Stewart	Daily Show-Jon Stewart
20:30 7th Heaven "Charity Begins at Home"	21:00 Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News	Blind Date	Blind Date
21:00 Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	21:30 Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News		
22:00 The Cosby Show	22:30 Home Improvement	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News		
23:00 Touched by an Angel "Moby's Day"	23:30	ESPIWes	Headline News	FOX News	FOX News		

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FACES

When fans get fanatic

Famous figures often forced to deal with out-of-control devotees

BY DERRIK J. LANGE
The Associated Press

NEW YORK

They're out there.

Catherine Zeta-Jones, Sheryl Crow and Mel Gibson recently faced theirs in court. Anna Kournikova's took a nude swim to find her. Andrea Evans feared hers for a decade.

They're celebrity stalkers, perpetrators of an emotional crime that's often — but not always — the result of mental illness.

Despite a recent rash of cases, experts say the act of celebrity stalking isn't increasing, but stars are more willing to go to police when confronted. And, of course, the media is more likely to cover subsequent arrests and trials. All this has led to specialized police units and even entire businesses aimed at dealing with a troubled few.

Evans was playing soap star Tina Clayton on "One Life to Live" in the 1980s when her stalker showed up several times at her Manhattan set. He once slashed his wrists outside the studios, then used Evans' name as his next-of-kin. "All of a sudden, I went from a nice happy-go-lucky life to having regular conversations with the police," Evans said. "This was before people were that aware. There was a great disbelief that there was this man trying to harm me and the police could do nothing about it."

After three years of living in terror, Evans quit "One Life to Live" and dropped out of public view. She wouldn't be seen on a soap again until 1999.

Following the murder of "My Sister Sam" actress Rebecca Schaeffer in 1989 and incidents like Evans', the government, Hollywood and the world began to recognize celebrity stalking about 1990.

As many armchair sleuths have learned from "CSI," material crimes like burglary and murder leave copious amounts of physical evidence — but stalking is harder to prove. Witness the love-struck Crow fan who was acquitted last November after ardently pursuing the singer for 15 months, claiming he communicated with her telepathically and even visiting her sister's father.

"Stalking is much more nebulous, much more of a challenge," said John Lane, a former Los Angeles Police Department detective. "It is very difficult to investigate."

Laws now exist in all states to combat stalking in some form or another. In Los Angeles, the LAPD's Threat Management Unit exclusively tackles stalking. In 2004, it handled 60 celebrity cases. That's typical, according to the unit's leader, Det. Jeff Dunn.



Above: William Lepaske, far left, was accused in February of stalking tennis player Anna Kournikova. Right: Dawnette Knight pleaded no contest in June to stalking and threatening actress Catherine Zeta-Jones. Far right: Mel Gibson leaves the Los Angeles Superior Court on March 3 after testifying against Zack Sinclair, who was convicted the next day of stalking the actor.

AP photos

"I think there's a rise in reporting," said Dunn. "Early in the '90s, there was reluctance for fear of negative publicity. I don't think they were widely reported. Now in 2005, you can't turn on the TV without seeing a story about some sort of stalking. It doesn't carry the negative stigma anymore."

In recent years, the likes of Pamela Anderson, Madonna, Steven Spielberg, Nicole Kidman, David Letterman and Gwyneth Paltrow have claimed stalkers. In the past few weeks alone, people were convicted or pleaded no contest to stalking Gibson and Zeta-Jones.

And in the Anna Kournikova case, a man was arrested Jan. 30 after swimming nude across a Florida bay toward Kournikova's \$5 million estate, then turning up on the pool deck at the wrong house and yelling, "Anna! Save me!"

Dunn said for every celebrity stalking case that's splashed across headlines, 20 are never heard about. Those type of cases often fall to Lane, who after helping establish the LAPD anti-stalking unit started his own personal security firm, Omega Threat Management Inc. It's one of several such companies that take care of celebrities' threats — for a price.

Much like murder, mental health plays a major part in the crime of stalking. But stalking isn't always the result of a mental disorder.

"Most of the time, what you've got is an individual who is lonely or socially incompetent," said Mace Benson, a psychiatrist at the University of California-Los Angeles who's worked on many stalking cases.

Celebrity stalkers

■ **Dec. 8, 1980:** Mark David Chapman shot and killed John Lennon. He's now serving a life sentence and has been denied parole three times.

■ **March 30, 1981:** John Hinckley Jr. attempted to assassinate President Ronald Reagan to gain actress Jodie Foster's attention. He was found not guilty by reason of insanity and remains in a psychiatric hospital.

■ **June 1, 1989:** Margaret Ray pleaded guilty to breaking and entering talk show host David Letterman's house. Diagnosed with schizophrenia, she served 10 months in prison and 14 months in a mental institution. In 1998, she committed suicide.

■ **Jan. 8, 1996:** Robert Hoskins convicted of assault, stalking and threatening to kill Madonna. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

■ **July 11, 1998:** Jonathan Norman caught breaking into the home of director Steven Spielberg with the intention of raping the director. He was sentenced to 25 years in life in prison.

■ **Sept. 5, 2000:** Mark Bailey sentenced to 10 years' probation and ordered to attend counseling twice weekly after sending threatening letters to Brooke Shields.

■ **Dec. 14, 2000:** Dante Michaiol Souci convicted of stalking Gwyneth Paltrow. He was sent to a high-security mental facility after a judge found him insane.

— The Associated Press



Brits laud Tarantino, others

Quentin Tarantino, director of cult movies "Pulp Fiction" and "Reservoir Dogs," was named Film Icon of the Decade at an awards ceremony in London.

Tarantino was among a cast of Hollywood and British movie talent recognized Sunday during the Empire Awards, which were voted for by more than 12,000 readers of Empire Magazine.

Accepting his award, the 41-year-old announced plans to retire from movie directing.

"I hope to give you at least 15 more years of movies, I'm not going to be this old guy that keeps cranking them out," Tarantino said.

Other award recipients included Matt Damon, who was voted Best Actor for his role in "The Bourne Supremacy." The action thriller also was named Best Film.

Julie Delpy was awarded Best Actress for "Before Sunset," and Kate Winslet's performance in "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" won her the Best British Actress Award.

Beatty takes jabs at Arnold

Warren Beatty, an actor who has been politically active for four decades, has some words of advice for fellow film star and now Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. Schwarzenegger should raise taxes on the California rich and "terminate" his

fund-raising and dinners with "the brokers of Wall Street" and the "lobbyists of K Street," Beatty said.

Receiving a political award Friday night, the actor who played Sen. Jay Byington Bulworth in the 1998 movie, "Bulworth," said: "Arnold. Be the action hero I know you can be. Be strong. Stand up and confront the wealthiest 1 percent of Californians who have benefited \$12 billion a year from the Bush tax cuts."

Beatty received the third annual Phillip Burton public service award Friday from the Santa Monica-based Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights for a lifetime of political work. Burton was a liberal San Francisco congressman who died in 1983.

Stories and photo from The Associated Press

Horoscope

A super-lucky aspect involving the moon, Jupiter and Neptune promises there is much to gain from talking about your wants, desires, dreams and goals. People need to help one another. Even if others haven't the physical or intellectual resources, the mere intention of helpfulness causes miraculous connections to occur. So speak up.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(March 16). Though careful planning brings certain goals to hand, leave room in your life for lucky things to just happen, too — you're a favorite of the universe, and if you trust, you will be granted special gifts. This month features a filtration; May brings love without changing your life for. Leo and Cancer are lucky romantic connections. Your career takes off in June.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Extra motivation is needed to get through this challenging day. Affirm to yourself over and over (100 times is barely enough) that you CAN do it. In fact, nobody does it better!

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Big, profound questions inform a million small decisions you'll make today about how to be and interact in your world. How will the world be a better place because you were in it?

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Someone near you is handing out points for being smart. But remember that being good is more important. The great genius scientist Albert Einstein said, "The most important human endeavor is striving for morality in our actions."

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The critics are at large. Try and see the strength in others even when their weaknesses are being pointed out. If you can find a reason and a way to be joyful, your joy is contagious.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You'll have the chance to be mature, though childish planets play in your psyche, making it easy for you not to be. Consider that love with strings

attached isn't love at all. It's business, really, and more about cause and effect.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Your emotions are not unlike the muscles in your body. They can be exercised to be more flexible, stronger and more toned. Dealing with children, or adults who act like children, gives you a real emotional workout today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). When does obsession become unhealthy? Someone or something you desire could be draining vital energy from other areas of your life. If you give your power away, the only one who can get it back is you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Planets provide plenty of distractions and opportunities for you to scatter your energy. If you can stay focused now, when it's challenging, you really can't lose. So stay on purpose.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). It's better to remain a mystery to certain people. Let them project themselves, making up their own story about who you are. You'll find humor in the scenarios they come up with.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Since who you love has such an enormous impact on the rest of your life, it makes sense to pour your time and energy into that area. Put all your emotions and your imagination toward creating a better relationship.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Address that unattained desire that's been on your list of New Year's resolutions for years now. Invest yourself in finally having this. The more defined your goal is, the more likely you are to obtain it.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Avoidance might work in the short term, but sooner or later, you'll have to face your fear. The weak person prays to be sheltered from adversity, while the strong one prays for the courage to conquer it.

Creators Syndicate

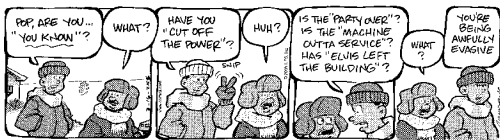
Holiday Mathis



Calvin and Hobbes



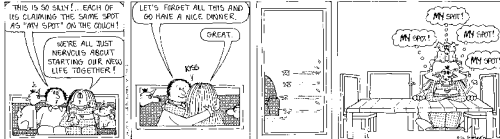
Jump Start



Zits



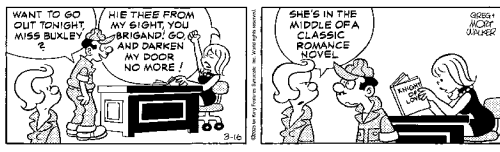
Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



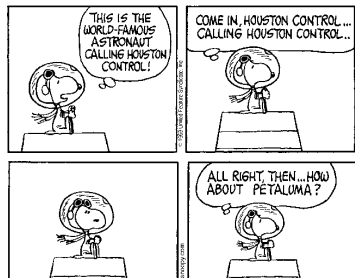
Red Rover



Better or Worse



Peanuts



Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



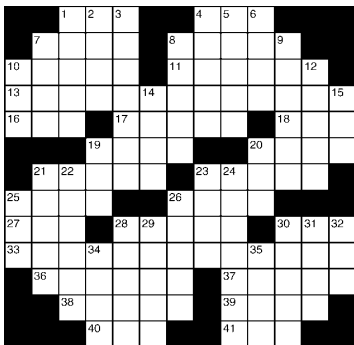
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Possesses
- 4 Orchestra's place
- 7 Fruit part
- 8 Tea variety
- 10 Cha-cha's cousin
- 11 Squirrel's stash
- 13 "Back at One" singer
- 16 Succor
- 17 Estimate
- 18 401(k) alternative
- 19 Panhandles
- 20 From square one
- 21 Terkel or Lonigan
- 23 All better
- 25 Stop up
- 26 "— and

Down

- 1 Like mid-August
- 2 Actress Jessica
- 3 Freeloaded
- 4 Bushel quarters
- 5 Religious images (var.)
- 6 Aaron's daughter
- 7 — mutual betting
- 8 Walks the floor
- 9 Motor
- 10 Biz deg.
- 12 Vestige
- 14 Oktoberfest crockery
- 15 Spotted, or Rozelle
- 17 Imperfection

- 20 Dadaist pioneer
- 21 Casino temptation
- 22 Hotel guests' needs
- 23 Barbershop item
- 24 Diamond experts?
- 25 Eye network
- 26 "What's My Line?" group
- 28 Merriment
- 29 Crowbar
- 30 Jacob's ladder, e.g.
- 31 Featherly stoics
- 32 Mole, maybe
- 34 Rose
- 35 Antitoxins

Answer to Previous Puzzle

W	I	S	H	K	E	N	D	O	J	O
A	S	H	Y	A	X	E	N	O	L	
S	L	U	E	H	I	A	W	A	T	H
P	E	N	N	A	N	T	I	R	O	N
B	A	S	S	A	D	S	A	N	T	
A	N	O		D	O	M	O	B	I	
H	Y	D	R	A	N	T	C	H	I	C
E	R	A	B	A						
A	S	P	I	C	F	I	R	I	N	G
H	E	I	G	H	T	E	N	K	O	L
E	V	E	N	W	E	D	U	S	E	S
M	E	S	S	A	S	S	E	E	S	

3-16 CRYPTOQUIP

EB XG W.X. CXRFCXWW
 AZL NXR X TGXJT BLZ
 RTFIJNEGD AEIQZFR. ER
 NF XG XZIBQW OLODFZ?
 Yesterday's Cryptquip: I IMAGINE THAT A CROSS BETWEEN A CANNON AND A BELL WOULD BE DUBBED "THE BOOMERANG."
 Today's Cryptquip Clue: X equals A

Soon-to-be in-law has big mouth

Dear Abby: I am an operating room nurse. My soon-to-be mother-in-law recently had a procedure done that required anesthesia. When the anesthesiologist arrived to interview her before her procedure, she proceeded to ask him if he knew me. He replied that he did.

Her next question was whether he knew that I did cosmetic surgery. Thankfully, he acted in a professional manner by simply saying, "Oh?" She continued the interrogation by asking him if he was aware that I had been previously engaged, and whether he thought I was a runaway bride or not.

I was flabbergasted that she had the gall to bring up such personal things with someone with whom I have a professional relationship. This is a small community where things spread like wildfire. I want to have a relationship with her, but I feel as though she kicked me in the stomach and stabbed me in

the back. Is there anything I can say to mommy, her aware of my feelings, or must I be respectful and keep my thoughts to myself? I am deeply hurt.

—Appalled in Iowa
Dear Appalled: Your fiancé's mother may have been nervous at the prospect of her surgery, started babbling and couldn't stop.

Dear Abby



However, unless you want a strained relationship with your in-laws, do not "confront" her. She can't untie the bell. Now that you know she lacks judgment and looks like a rusty bucket, in the future consider nothing to her unless you want the whole town to know.

Dear Abby: My son is 15.

When we're home and watching TV in the evening, my son often enjoys cuddling up next to me. He'll put his head on my shoulder and wants my arm around his shoulders. I, too, enjoy this

very much, and when he says, "Oh, Mommy, I love you so much," as he often does, my heart melts. I should mention that he is still shorter than me, though barely. He is not the typical 15-year-old who towers over his mother.

Until recently, I thought our closeness would help him develop into a warm, loving man; but now, I'm wondering if this is healthy for him to be doing and for me to allow. I would hate to see him develop into a needy, clingy man or a mama's boy.

Just a Loving Mom in Australia

Dear Loving Mom: Every parent should be so blessed as to have a son like yours. You have raised a loving only child who is bonded to his parents. If he doesn't start dating by the time he's 18, THEN there may be cause to worry. Otherwise, he sounds just fine to me.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at: <http://www.ueppress.com/dearabby>
Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

EGGRO

CUFOS

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GARNAL

A: THE

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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: GUILT ORBIT FUNGUS TANKER

Answer: When the king went out for the night, he wore this — "REIGN" OUTFIT

Affair leaves woman confused

Dear Annie: I am a married woman with one child. We don't lack for anything. My husband is an OK guy and a good father, but he's a very self-centered.

Last May, one of my neighbors started to show an interest in me. "Jack" also is married (his wife is a bit of a hypochondriac), and he has a small child. A few months ago, at a party we both attended, Jack had a few drinks and gave me a passionate kiss. I have never been kissed like that in my life. I sent shock waves through my entire body. After that, we would slip away and kiss here and there. Then it started to be more. Now we have a secret affair going on.

I don't want to get caught, but I also don't want to give him up. It is like I finally found my soul mate.

—Very Confused

Dear Confused: Don't confuse passion kisses with Jack being your soul mate. This is lust, not love. Are you willing to wreck two

Annie's Mailbox



marriages and destroy your child's sense of security for shock waves? Illicit affairs can be temporarily exciting, but the consequences are often permanently painful.

Tell your husband you want to see a counselor. If he won't go, go without him. Learn how to put some of that sexual energy into your marriage, or make a clean break.

Dear Annie: I am responding to the letter from "Negative Dad."

He said his son's blood type is O, while his is AB and his wife's is A. He assumed he was not his son's biological father.

Classification into the major blood groups is based on the presence or absence of two proteins, the A and B antigens, produced by the A and B alleles. The absence of either A or B antigens is called Type O.

The son gets one gene from each parent. If the parent has one

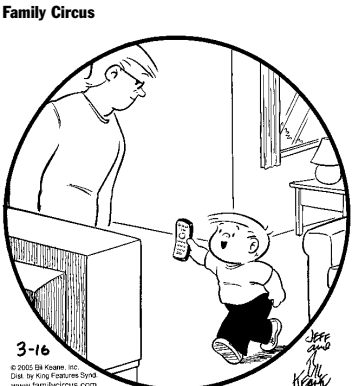
chromosome with an antigen and one without, he or she can pass either one on to the child. The writer, told he is "type AB," assumes he must pass on either the A or the B allele, but cannot have a son with neither. But other factors may block the expression of these alleles, so the blood of the child with A or B or AB genotype may be reported as Type O. These other factors are not reported in ordinary ABO typing. There is also the possibility of laboratory error.

The reader should seek a consultation with a geneticist and not proceed with a potentially destructive confrontation on the basis of the major blood types.

—Gordon Harper, M.D., Harvard Medical School

Dear Dr. Harper: Thank you for providing a valid reason for Dad to believe his son belongs to him biologically as well as in every other way.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.
Creators Syndicate



"You're right! I found the remote in the very right place I looked."

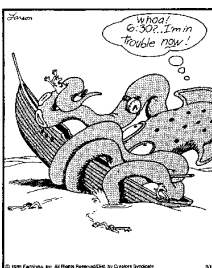


Dennis the Menace

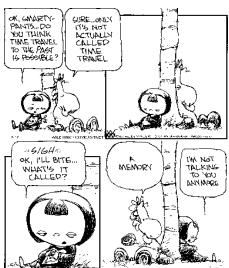


"I'M A RUFF THOUGHT WE'D SLEEP WITH YOU GUYS SO YOU WON'T BE AFRAID OF THE THUNDERSTORM."

The Far Side



Non Sequitur



Bad news for Cubs: Prior out indefinitely

The Associated Press

Now the Chicago Cubs have two injured aces.

Mark Prior will be out indefinitely because of inflammation in his right elbow, joining fellow left-hander Kerry Wood on the sideline for a while.

Wood, slated to start on Opening Day, is out with bursitis in his right shoulder.

Cubs trainer Mark O'Neal said Monday the 24-year-old Prior has some inflammation in the elbow joint and a little irritation to the ulnar nerve.

Prior, an 18-game winner in 2003, missed the first two months of last season because of right Achilles' tendinitis and stiffness in his right elbow. Last July, he missed a start because of discomfort in the elbow. But Prior and O'Neal said the current injury is not related to last year's problem.

Prior made his Cactus League debut Thursday, throwing three innings against Seattle. He said Monday that while doing some routine postgame exercises, he felt discomfort in the elbow.

Cubs General Manager Jim Hendry said Prior saw elbow specialist Dr. Lewis Yocum last weekend and had a precautionary MRI on Sunday.

"There is no damage to the nerve," Hendry said in Mesa, Ariz. "The ligament remains exactly the same from the MRI last year."

Prior was supposed to pitch Tuesday against Kansas City but will miss that start, O'Neal said. That in addition to rest, Prior is taking anti-inflammatory medication and the Cubs would see how he responds before determining when he will begin throwing again.

Prior is scheduled to make his first start on April 5 at Arizona, the Cubs' second game of the season.

Wood played catch on flat ground Monday, testing his

Spring training

right shoulder. Pitching coach Larry Rothschild said the right-hander felt fine, and he could throw off a mound on Wednesday.

Rothschild said he expects Wood and Prior to be ready to make their first start of the regular season.

Yankees closer Mariano Rivera also has a sore right elbow, but his problem is not considered serious. He will be out at least a few days with mild bursitis.

"It's not a major concern," manager Joe Torre said in Tampa, Fla. "He will probably pitch by the end of the week."

Rivera is not concerned, and expects to be ready for Opening Day.

"I threw yesterday and everything was fine," Rivera said. "Today, I got to the field and it felt like my elbow was a little sore. It's a little swelling in the elbow. I'll be ready for the season."

At Bradenton, Fla., Todd Ritchie told the Pittsburgh Pirates that he plans to retire, ending his comeback but after missing nearly two seasons because of a right shoulder injury.

The Los Angeles Dodgers got much better news about Brad Penny in Vero Beach, Fla., where he had an impressive 65-pitch bullpen session.

Penny threw 14 breaking balls in the first inning of his spring as he continues to recover from the nerve injury in his right biceps last season.

"I felt really good," he said. "Even the chafeurs were good, which surprised me because it was the first time I'd thrown them."

If his next session goes well, it's possible Penny could pitch in an exhibition game within one week.

Seig to testify on Cane's HLL

Lawyers for three subpoenaed players work to get them excused from Thursday's hearing

BY RONALD BLUM

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Major League Baseball gave a congressional committee about 400 pages of documents on drug testing and said commissioner Bud Selig was willing to testify at Thursday's hearing on steroid use.

Lawyers for Jason Giambi, Frank Thomas and Rafael Palmeiro asked the committee to withdraw subpoenas for their clients, and lawyers for players and the commissioner's office continued to negotiate with committee staff Monday, trying to narrow the scope of questioning. Bob DuPuy, baseball's chief operating officer, and Rob Manfred, the executive vice president in charge of labor relations, were in Washington to meet with the committee staff.

Just three days before the hearing, it remained unclear whether Mark McGwire, Giambi, Curt Schilling and other current and former stars would testify before the House Government Reform Committee.

Former AL MVP Jose Canseco and Schilling are the only players who have said they are willing to appear in Washington on Thursday.

Selig, who initially offered a top aide as a substitute, reversed course Monday and offered to appear.

"I am proud of the progress baseball has made on the subject of steroids and performance-enhancing drugs and look forward to sharing this information with the committee," he said in a statement. "The players stepped up this past January for an even stricter drug policy beginning this season demonstrating that all of us in baseball are committed to reaching zero tolerance."



Commissioner Bud Selig said in a statement, 'I am proud of the progress baseball has made on the subject of steroids and performance-enhancing drugs and look forward to sharing this information with the committee.'

Sammy Sosa, Thomas and Palmeiro were subpoenaed last week along with Canseco, whose recent book alleged several top players used steroids. Union head Donald Fehr also was summoned along with Manfred, baseball executive vice president Sandy Alderson and San Diego general manager Kevin Towers.

Canseco has asked for immunity in order to speak more freely.

The committee consulted the Justice Department but didn't expect to hear back until Tuesday evening, according to Canseco's lawyer, Robert Saunooke.

Saunooke said players were unsure whether the committee had power to grant immunity from both federal and state prosecution.

"There's a part of me that would like to believe that once immunity is granted by Congress, there's not a state prosecutor who would thumb their nose at this," he said.

In its subpoena last week, the committee asked for 11 types of documents, including current and past drug-testing agreements and policies going back to 1970, test results from 2003 and 2004, past management bargaining proposals and studies, and details of disciplinary action since 1990 related to drug use. It also asked for results of tests since given to players subject to "cause" testing, a group that includes Darryl Strawberry and Dwight Gooden.

"We gave them roughly 400 pages of documents, substantial compliance with all of the issues they identified in their subpoena relating to our policies and our aggregate numbers," said Stan Brand, a lawyer for the commissioner's office.

Asked what was not turned over, Brand responded: "We presented them with the gross figures, how many people were tested and how many turned out positive and for what. We did not give anything relating to individual tests and results."

Brand said that because of the short time period, baseball could not assure the committee that all

relevant information had been submitted.

"Under the circumstances, I think we're pretty confident we got all that they identified," Brand said.

Committee staff sent Monday examining the documents.

"I don't think they have a sense of what's in there," Robert White, a spokesman for committee chairman Tom Davis said.

David McIntosh and Michael Kantor, lawyers for Giambi, Palmeiro and Thomas, sent three letters to the committee. They asked that Giambi be excused until after the prosecution is over with because of his grand jury testimony.

"Giambi" became the focus of extremely negative publicity, not only throughout the nation but worldwide," they wrote. "He will have to live with this stigma for the rest of his life."

For Palmeiro, they said "to require that he come to answer baseless charges is unfair." And for Thomas, they said traveling to Washington "could have adverse circulatory effects that could substantially impede Mr. Thomas' recovery" from ankle surgery.

Davis, a Virginia Republican, has threatened to cite any subpoenaed witness who doesn't appear for contempt of Congress. He also has said one of the seven players who might be excused, most likely Giambi, who testified in 2003 before a federal grand jury investigating illegal steroid distribution.

Canseco's official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said it was increasingly likely that Giambi will be excused. However, the subpoena cannot be formally withdrawn until the committee hears from the Justice Department.

Each witness is required to submit 100 copies of his opening statement to the committee by the close of business Tuesday, according to White. But he added that the deadline for statements often is not strictly enforced.

The union and players agents have discussed whether to offer to have a few of the players make statements to the committee but not answer questions, but the players' representatives were not all in favor of that strategy.

Brand said baseball also was willing to have Alderson testify.

White House press secretary Scott McClellan said the hearings were a congressional matter but added: "Major League Baseball is responding to the message that they heard. They have taken an important step to confront the problem. They're expanding testing and increasing penalties."

Sen. Jim Bunning of Kentucky, a Hall of Fame pitcher invited to testify Thursday, said baseball's antitrust exemption might have to be re-examined if changes aren't made to the sport's drug-testing program, which was recently modified to include a 10-day penalty for first-time offenders.

AP Sports Writer Howard Fendrich in Washington contributed to this report.

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SCOREBOARD

AFN TV & Radio

Wednesday

AFN-Sports, 630 a.m. Outdoors: Babe Winkelman's Good Fishing (Ind.)
AFN-Sports, 630 p.m. Auto racing: Minnesota at Dallas (Ind.)
AFN-Sports, 9 p.m. Pacific Life Open, women's quarterfinals.

Thursday

AFN-Radio, 1300 a.m. Pro basketball: Seattle at Detroit.
AFN-Sports, 630 a.m. Pro basketball: NFL 1st round game, Vanderbilt at Minnesota.
AFN-Sports, 630 p.m. Pro basketball: Minnesota at St. Antonio.
AFN-Sports, 9 p.m. Pro basketball: NFL 1st round, Arizona St. at UNLV (Ind.)
AFN-Sports, 9 p.m. Pro basketball: Seattle at Detroit (Ind.)
AFN-Sports, 9 p.m. Track and field: NCAA Indoor Championships (Ind.)
AFN-Sports, 9 p.m. College basketball: NCAA men's tournament, 1st round, men's.

All times are Central European Time. Ind. indicates delayed live action. All times subject to change. Visit www.afn.net for more information.

Baseball

Spring training games

AMERICAN LEAGUE

W	L	Pct.
Cleveland	19	.424
Los Angeles	19	.424
Tampa Bay	19	.424
Chicago	19	.424
Minnesota	19	.424
Seattle	19	.424
Boston	19	.424
Texas	19	.424
Seattle	19	.424
Seattle	19	.424

NATIONAL LEAGUE

W	L	Pct.
Colorado	9	.692
San Francisco	9	.692
St. Louis	9	.692
Baltimore	9	.692
Atlanta	9	.692
Washington	9	.692
Philadelphia	9	.692
San Diego	9	.692
San Diego	9	.692
Pittsburgh	9	.692
Pittsburgh	9	.692
Pittsburgh	9	.692

Indicates split-squad games against non-major league teams.

Monday's games

Florida, 4 p.m. vs. Minnesota
 Atlanta, 5 p.m. vs. Boston
 L.A. Dodgers vs. Cleveland at Winter Haven, Fla., 7 p.m.
 N.Y. Mets vs. Washington at Winter Haven, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Philadelphia 10, Toronto 8
 Cincinnati (3) at Detroit (5)
 L.A. Angels 10, Texas 6
 Colorado 11, Arizona 8
 San Diego 6, Seattle (3)
 Chicago White Sox vs. Chicago Cubs 5
 Milwaukee 6, Kansas City (5)
 Detroit (5) at Kansas City (5)
 Detroit (5) at Cincinnati (5)
 Detroit vs. Detroit at Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Florida vs. Tampa Bay at St. Petersburg, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Minnesota vs. Florida (5) at Jupiter, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Baltimore vs. Toronto at Fort Lauderdale, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Cleveland (5) vs. Washington (5) at St. Lucie, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Oakland vs. Seattle at Peoria, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Chicago White Sox vs. Kansas City at Mesa, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 L.A. Angels vs. Chicago White Sox at Mesa, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Washington (5) vs. Houston at Kissimmee, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Texas (5) vs. Milwaukee (5) at Phoenix, 7 p.m.
 Arizona vs. Texas (5) at Scottsdale, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Kansas City vs. Chicago Cubs at Mesa, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 L.A. Angels vs. Chicago White Sox at Mesa, Ariz., 7 p.m.

Tuesday's games

San Francisco vs. Seattle at Peoria, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 San Diego vs. Oakland at Peoria, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 L.A. Angels vs. Colorado at Tucson, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Chicago White Sox vs. Kansas City at Mesa, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Washington vs. Atlanta at Kissimmee, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Texas vs. Arizona at Tucson, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 N.Y. Mets vs. Washington at Winter Haven, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Baltimore vs. Toronto at Fort Lauderdale, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Atlanta vs. St. Louis at Fort Lauderdale, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Philadelphia vs. Cincinnati at Sarasota, Fla., 7 p.m.
 San Francisco vs. Seattle at Peoria, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 San Diego vs. Oakland at Peoria, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 L.A. Angels vs. Colorado at Tucson, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Chicago White Sox vs. Kansas City at Mesa, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Washington vs. Atlanta at Kissimmee, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Texas vs. Arizona at Tucson, Ariz., 7 p.m.

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 Washington vs. Atlanta at Kissimmee, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Texas vs. Arizona at Tucson, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 N.Y. Mets vs. Washington at Winter Haven, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Baltimore vs. Toronto at Fort Lauderdale, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Atlanta vs. St. Louis at Fort Lauderdale, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Philadelphia vs. Cincinnati at Sarasota, Fla., 7 p.m.
 San Francisco vs. Seattle at Peoria, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 San Diego vs. Oakland at Peoria, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 L.A. Angels vs. Colorado at Tucson, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Chicago White Sox vs. Kansas City at Mesa, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Washington vs. Atlanta at Kissimmee, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Texas vs. Arizona at Tucson, Ariz., 7 p.m.

Thursday's games

San Francisco vs. Seattle at Peoria, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 San Diego vs. Oakland at Peoria, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 L.A. Angels vs. Colorado at Tucson, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Chicago White Sox vs. Kansas City at Mesa, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Washington vs. Atlanta at Kissimmee, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Texas vs. Arizona at Tucson, Ariz., 7 p.m.

Florida vs. Boston at Fort Myers, Fla., 7 p.m.
 San Francisco vs. Texas at Surprise, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Kansas City vs. L.A. Angels at Tempe, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Arizona (5) vs. Colorado (5) at Tucson, Ariz., 7 p.m.
 Cincinnati vs. Minnesota at Fort Myers, Fla., 7 p.m.
 Detroit vs. N.Y. Yankees at Tampa, Fla., 7 p.m.

College basketball

Men's Division II tournament

Regional Semifinals

Northwest

At Wallum, Mass.
 Bryant 76, Bloomsdale 55
 Bentley 90, Southern New Hampshire 84

South

At Mississippi, Miss.
 Mount Olive 72, Indiana 34
 Salem International 105, Pfeiffer 92

Central

Tarleton State 65, Pittsburg State 52
 Texas A&M-Commerce 81, Central Oklahoma 73

East

At Montevideo, Ala.
 Utah 73, Central Arkansas 69
 Montevideo 65, Eckerd 60

At Findlay, Ohio

Ferris State 63, Indiana 34
 Findlay 63, Wayne State Mich. 49

At Denver

South Dakota 73, Winona State 68
 Metro State 85, Minnesota State-Mankato 64

At Bowling Green

Georgia Southern 77, Southern Indiana 72
 Bowling State 84, Columbus State 72

Regional Finals

Northwest

At Wallum, Mass.
 Cal Poly Pomona 85, Alaska-Fairbanks 58
 Bentley 90, Southern New Hampshire 84

South

At Mississippi, Miss.
 Mount Olive 72, Indiana 34
 Salem International 105, Pfeiffer 92

Central

Tarleton State 65, Pittsburg State 52
 Texas A&M-Commerce 81, Central Oklahoma 73

East

At Montevideo, Ala.
 Utah 73, Central Arkansas 69
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At Denver

South Dakota 73, Winona State 68
 Metro State 85, Minnesota State-Mankato 64

At Bowling Green

Georgia Southern 77, Southern Indiana 72
 Bowling State 84, Columbus State 72

Regional Finals

Northwest

At Wallum, Mass.
 Cal Poly Pomona 85, Alaska-Fairbanks 58
 Bentley 90, Southern New Hampshire 84

South

At Mississippi, Miss.
 Mount Olive 72, Indiana 34
 Salem International 105, Pfeiffer 92

Central

Tarleton State 65, Pittsburg State 52
 Texas A&M-Commerce 81, Central Oklahoma 73

East

At Montevideo, Ala.
 Utah 73, Central Arkansas 69
 Montevideo 65, Eckerd 60

At Findlay, Ohio

Ferris State 63, Indiana 34
 Findlay 63, Wayne State Mich. 49

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At The Gannett Pavilion
 Temple 72-33 vs. Louisiana Tech (2-9)
 Rutgers 22-20 vs. Arizona (2-9)
At Connecticut
 Ohio State (28-5) vs. Holy Cross (20-10)
 Connecticut (21-9) vs. Wisconsin (21-9)

CHATTANOOGA REGIONAL

First Round

At Reunion Arena
 Dallas
 Texas (24-5) vs. Oral Roberts (22-8)
 Georgia (22-9) vs. Rice (24-8)

At Thompson Coliseum

Knoxville, Tenn.
 Oklahoma (23-5) vs. Arizona (21-11)
 LSU (29-2) vs. Stetson (17-13)

At the Gannett Pavilion

DePaul (25-4) vs. Virginia Tech (17-11)
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At the Dean E. Smith Center

Duke (28-4) vs. Carolina (21-9)
 Boston College (24-9) vs. Missouri (21-9)

KANSAS CITY REGIONAL

First Round

Saturday, March 19
 At Williams Arena
 Minnesota
 Southern California (20) vs. Louisville (22-8)

At the Gannett Pavilion

DePaul (25-4) vs. Virginia Tech (17-11)
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KANSAS CITY REGIONAL

First Round

Saturday, March 19
 At Williams Arena
 Minnesota
 Southern California (20) vs. Louisville (22-8)

SMU (19-10) at Southwest Missouri State
 New Orleans (17-13) at Marquette (18-11)
 Eastern Michigan (24-4) at Kentucky
 Villanova (19-11) at Chattanooga (24-4)
 Michigan State (21-9) at Wake Forest (24-13)
 Miami (20-5) at Utah Valley (17-12)
 Cleveland State (21-9) at Cleveland State (21-9)
 Creighton (19-9) at Iowa (20-9)
 Kansas State (20-10) at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi (22-6)

Tennis

Pacific Life Open

Monday

At the Indian Wells Tennis Club
 Indian Wells, Calif.
 Purse: Men, \$7,500,000; Women, \$2,1 million (Tier I)
 Surface: Hard-Indoor
 Singles
 Men
 First Round
 Novak Djokovic (3), United States, def. Jiri Novak (20), Czech Republic, 6-2, 6-2
 Andy Roddick (6), Britain, def. Jürgen Melzer



Spurs forward Tim Duncan grabs a rebound in front of Hornets forward P.J. Brown during the third quarter in San Antonio on Monday. Duncan had 18 points and 13 rebounds after missing the past two games.

Heat, Spurs keep the top up

The Associated Press

Shaquille O'Neal looked at the big picture after the streaking Miami Heat moved into a virtual tie with Phoenix and San Antonio for the NBA's best record.

"I wouldn't say I'm impressed," O'Neal said. "I'd just say that the job is not done. It's not even almost done."

On Monday night, Dwyane Wade scored 29 points on 10-of-12 shooting in just 26 minutes. O'Neal added 21 points and the Heat led by as many as 40 in their 110-71 home victory over the Milwaukee Bucks.

"Everyone's clicking at the right time," Wade said. "Our teamwork is great, and it's coming together at the right time — right before the playoffs."

It was the third-largest victory margin in franchise history for Miami (49-16), which has won a league-best nine straight overall and 13 in a row at home.

Phoenix and San Antonio are 48-15. San Antonio routed New Orleans 112-89 on Monday night, and Phoenix was idle after beating Denver on Sunday night.

The Heat, who can clinch a playoff spot with a victory in New York on Tuesday night, are 8½ games in front of second-place Detroit in the Eastern Conference.

Miami has won its past nine by an average of 17.6 points.

"I've never experienced anything like this before," said Eddie Jones, who added 10 points. "I just think it's great. If we can continue to do that, that's great. All we're going to do is continue to get better if we do that."

Michael Redd had 14 points for the Bucks. Milwaukee, 2-8 in its past 10 road games shot 32.1 percent in its most lopsided loss of the season.



"We didn't execute at all," Bucks forward Desmond Mason said. "We didn't step up and play basketball. You can rank tonight as one of our worst outings."

Spurs 112, Hornets 89: At San Antonio, Tim Duncan had 18 points and 13 rebounds in his return to the San Antonio lineup after missing two games because of a sprained right ankle and tightness in his back.

While Duncan returned, point guard Tony Parker missed his first game of the season because of a quadriceps injury, and Miami Ginobili sat out with a groin injury.

Beno Udrih, a 22-year-old rookie from Slovenia, scored a career-high 25 points on 9-of-13 shooting in his first career start in place of Parker.

Brent Barry added 17 points in place of Ginobili.

"It's real important for those guys to do that," San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich said, "because that's the depth we talk about and haven't seen for about a month."

Lee Nailon led New Orleans with 18 points.

Pistons 114, Hawks 108, OT: At Atlanta, Tayshaun Prince scored a career-high 31 points, and Detroit bounced back from the lowest-scoring game in franchise history.

Rasheed Wallace added a season-best 28 points for the Pistons, who failed to make a field goal in the fourth quarter Sunday night in a 64-62 victory over Utah.

Atlanta's Tom Gugliotta hit a three-pointer with 6.4 seconds

left to force overtime. Al Harrington had a season-high 37 points for the Hawks, 1-15 in their past 16 games.

Detroit played without coach Larry Brown, who had additional surgery Monday related to a November hip operation.

Wizards 95, Lakers 81: At Washington, Larry Hughes had 21 points and 12 rebounds to help Washington sweep a season series with the Lakers for the first time in franchise history.

Gilbert Arenas added 21 points for the Wizards, overtime winners over the Lakers in their first meeting of the season in Los Angeles.

Caron Butler had 20 points and 11 rebounds for the Lakers, and Kobe Bryant added 18 points on 6-of-22 shooting.

Rockets 97, Warriors 94: Tracy McGrady had 20 points and seven rebounds, and Houston wrapped up a four-game West Coast swing with its fifth straight victory.

Juan Howard added 18 points and seven rebounds before leaving with a sprained right knee with 9:18 left in the fourth quarter.

Zarko Cabarkaba had career highs of 26 points and 10 rebounds for Golden State.

Celtics 119, Bobcats 110: At Charlotte, N.C., Ricky Davis scored 27 points, and Antoine Walker had 25 to lead Boston to its fourth straight victory.

Grizzlies 104, Trail Blazers 83: At Memphis, Tenn., Mike Miller scored 27 points, and Lorenzen Wright had 19 points in the fourth quarter Sunday night in a 64-62 victory over Utah.

Atlanta's Tom Gugliotta hit a three-pointer with 6.4 seconds

NBA scoreboard

Eastern Conference

x-Miami	49	15	754	GB
x-Detroit	33	23	629	8½
x-Boston	29	24	547	13½
Washington	34	17	557	13
Orlando	33	27	559	13½
Chicago	32	28	533	14½
Indiana	31	31	509	18½
Philadelphia	31	31	509	18½
Philadelphia	31	31	476	18
New Jersey	28	36	438	21½
Toronto	26	36	429	21
x-San Antonio	48	15	762	—
x-Seattle	42	21	689	5
Dallas	41	21	661	8½
Sacramento	39	25	699	11
San Antonio	38	26	619	11½
Memphis	36	27	571	12
x-Division leader	32	30	516	15½

Western Conference

x-Phoenix	W	L	FG	FT	GB
x-Seattle	48	15	762	—	
Dallas	42	21	689	5	
Sacramento	39	25	699	11	
San Antonio	38	26	619	11½	
Memphis	36	27	571	12	
x-Division leader	32	30	516	15½	
Lakers	32	30	516	15½	
Minnesota	32	30	509	16½	
Lakers	32	30	444	20	
Portland	28	34	377	24	
Utah	20	42	323	27½	
Golden State	20	42	323	27½	
New Orleans	18	44	226	33½	

Monday's games

Boston 119, Hawks 108	Lakers 81, Hornets 95
Washington 95, Lakers 81	Miami 112, Spurs 89
Memphis 104, Portland 83	San Antonio 112, New Orleans 89
Houston 97, Golden State 94	

Tuesday's games

Utah at Chicago	Lakers at Philadelphia
Atlanta at Dallas	Minnesota at New York
Portland at San Antonio	

Wednesday's games

Utah at Indiana	Toronto at Boston
Washington at Atlanta	Chicago at New Jersey
Seattle at Detroit	Cleveland at Milwaukee
Memphis at New Orleans	Portland at Houston
Charlotte at Denver	Minnesota at San Antonio
Orlando at Dallas	

Thursday's games

Lakers at Miami	Portland at Dallas
Sacramento at Golden State	

Monday

Celtics 119, Bobcats 110: Boston — Pierce 29-11-12, Walker 12-12-12, Garnett 16-12-12, Ray 12-12-12, Allen 12-12-12, Davis 12-12-12, Jeffries 12-12-12, Howard 12-12-12, Williams 12-12-12, Johnson 12-12-12, O'Neal 12-12-12, Redd 12-12-12, Smith 12-12-12, Tucker 12-12-12, Vandevoort 12-12-12, White 12-12-12, Wright 12-12-12, Zerk 12-12-12, Adams 12-12-12, Bledsoe 12-12-12, Brown 12-12-12, Carter 12-12-12, Collins 12-12-12, Frazier 12-12-12, Givens 12-12-12, Hakeem 12-12-12, Johnson 12-12-12, Jordan 12-12-12, Lester 12-12-12, Mack 12-12-12, McMillen 12-12-12, Morris 12-12-12, Netem 12-12-12, Olajuwon 12-12-12, Payton 12-12-12, Robinson 12-12-12, Sampson 12-12-12, Schepers 12-12-12, Shuler 12-12-12, Skiles 12-12-12, Tatum 12-12-12, Thibault 12-12-12, Tucker 12-12-12, Van Arman 12-12-12, Williams 12-12-12, Wood 12-12-12, Wright 12-12-12, Zerk 12-12-12, Adams 12-12-12, Bledsoe 12-12-12, Brown 12-12-12, Carter 12-12-12, Collins 12-12-12, Frazier 12-12-12, Givens 12-12-12, Hakeem 12-12-12, 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Cleveland cuts E Brown

Redskins reportedly pursuing first pick of 2000 draft

The Associated Press

Cleveland released defensive end Courtney Brown on Monday, yet another former first-round pick who failed to make it with the team.

Washington Redskins coach George Brown wasted no time pursuing Brown. Within hours of his release, Gibbs flew to Cleveland with defensive line coach Greg Blache and his wife Monday night, an official within the league told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The official said Brown was expected to visit Redskins Park later this week.

Brown, the first overall choice in the 2000 draft, was cut by Cleveland because he would not renegotiate his contract. He would have been a \$2.5 million roster bonus last year.

Brown's General Manager Phil Savage said he still hoped the team could re-sign the oft-injured defensive end.

But Brown quickly drew interest from other teams, including the Redskins. Washington is in need of a pass-rushing end, having relied heavily on linebackers and cornerbacks for many of their sacks last season.

But Brown also was a teammate at Penn State with Redskins linebacker LaVar Arrington, the No. 2 overall pick in 2000. If Washington acquires Brown, the team will have the top three picks from that draft, Brown, Arrington and tackle Chris Samuels.



Brown hasn't played a full season since his rookie year. He has missed 33 games with injuries over the past four seasons, including the final 14 games last year after tearing a ligament in his foot.

Without Brown, the first three No. 1 picks that Cleveland took after it returned to the league in 1999 are gone. Brown joins quarterback Tim Couch, the first overall pick in 1999, and defensive tackle Gerard Warren, No. 3 overall in 2001, as ex-Browns. Couch was released last June and Warren was traded to Denver on March 2 for a fourth-round pick.

The team also has given running back William Green, its first-round pick in 2002, permission to seek a trade.

In addition to letting Brown go Monday, Cleveland signed veteran defensive lineman Sam Fisk. Cincinnati made a similar move, signing defensive tackle Bryan Robinson, who played for Chicago the past six seasons.

The Oakland Raiders re-signed free agent defensive end Bobby Hamilton to a \$6 million, three-year contract, keeping a key member of their revamped defense from last season.

The 33-year-old Hamilton, known as a talented run stopper, was the most consistent player on

the Raiders' rebuilt defensive front last season. He started 15 games last season and played in all 16 for the Raiders (5-11), recording 57 tackles — 36 solo — a sack and three pass deflections.

The Vikings welcomed former Buc QB Brad Johnson for a workout, now that they are in the market for a backup to Daunte Culpepper after Gus Frerotte agreed to sign with Miami.

Frerotte, who played behind Culpepper for the past two seasons, joined former Vikings offensive coordinator Scott Lincum with the Dolphins, according to Minnesota vice president for football operations Rob Berezinski.

"Brad had a great visit," coach Mike Tice said in an e-mail. "He was not only very good ... he's great anticipation on his throws. He would be a great fit for us."

The New York Giants cut defensive lineman Norman Hand, Miami cut fullback Rob Kolar, and Buffalo released Pierre Prieau after the backup safety rejected the team's offer to restructure his contract.

In Detroit, new backup Jeff Garcia said he has accepted his role behind Joey Harrington. Garcia was another player the Browns cut. "I'm not there to create any friction, I'm not there to create any controversy," Garcia said in a conference call, two days after agreeing to a one-year, \$2 million deal. "I'm just there to add strength to the position."



Courtney Brown has missed 33 games with injuries over the past four seasons, including 14 last season with a foot injury.

On Tuesday, free agent tight end Anthony Becht signed a five-year contract with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, a move coach Jon Gruden is counting on to help the club's inconsistent running game.

Becht, who the Jets selected with the 27th pick in the 2000 draft, contributed to the success of running back Curtis Martin, the NFL rushing champion last season.

In other news, the first NFL regular-season game outside the United States is expected to take place Oct. 2, when the Arizona Cardinals face San Francisco in Mexico City.

The game is expected to be a Sunday night contest televised by ESPN. It would be a home game for the Cardinals, who rarely sell out their stadium but could draw 100,000 or more in Mexico City. "We're working on it but it's not finalized yet," NFL spokesman Greg Alie said Tuesday.

Callahan's deposition might hurt Williams

By GUY ASHLEY
CONTRA COSTA TIMES
(Walnut Creek, Calif.)

OAKLAND, Calif. — Former Oakland Raiders tight end Marcus Williams was a "work in progress" whose future as a professional football player hinged on whether he could bring more consistency to his blocking and pass-catching skills, his former coach said in a videotaped deposition played in court Monday morning.

"There was an uncertainty as to whether he would mature into an NFL-caliber player," former Raiders coach Bill Callahan said in the deposition he gave in August as part of Williams' lawsuit against former teammate Bill Romanowski.

Williams is seeking more than \$3.8 million in the suit, which accuses Romanowski of battery, intentional infliction of emotional distress and negligence in connection with an August 2003 practice field incident in which Callahan tore off Williams' helmet and punched him in the left eye.

Williams' lawyers say the punch broke their client's eye socket and caused serious emotional and cognitive problems, ending his professional football career.

But Romanowski's lawyers have tried throughout the trial to minimize Williams' potential losses, asserting he was a marginal player whose future in the NFL was in doubt when he was injured.

This view of Williams may be bolstered by the statements from Callahan, who led the Raiders to the Super Bowl after the 2002 season but was fired after the team went 4-12 in 2003.

Williams was a rookie in 2002 and was trying to make the Raiders roster when he was felled by the Romanowski blow during the 2003 preseason. At the time, Callahan said, Williams was a regular on special teams who only occasionally displayed the skills needed to develop into a regular in the Raiders' offense.

"In Marcus' case, there were elements that flashed — but not on a consistent basis," said Callahan, who was the coach at the University of Nebraska.

If Romanowski is found liable, the issue of damages will hinge largely on whether the jury believes Callahan had a future in the NFL.

An economist testified last week that Williams could have suffered as much as \$8.7 million in lost earnings and medical costs by having his career ended. But that figure assumes Williams would have developed into a regular player and had an NFL career spanning at least seven seasons, economist Robert Johnson testified.

Had Williams not progressed, Johnson added, that figure could have been as low as \$1 million. Lawyers for Romanowski say they should complete their case Tuesday.

Georgia Tech's Gailey OK after heart attack

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — It was a normal morning for Chan Gailey. The Georgia Tech football coach was running around the racquetball court, getting in a little exercise before going down to work.

Suddenly, he felt a tightening in his chest.

Then, a pain surged through his left arm.

He was having a heart attack. Gailey was rushed to the hospital Monday, where doctors performed a balloon angioplasty to clear an artery that was totally blocked. He was resting comfortably and expected to make a full recovery.

"It was touch and go for a little while, it really was," athletic director Dave Braine said. "We were told it was serious, so everybody said a prayer and hoped he was going to be fine, and he is. His family — his wife and his two sons — are there with him and he's doing well."

Gailey, who turned 53 in January, began feeling pain during his usual early morning racquetball game at the campus recreation center. "He does it religiously every morning, so it isn't like he's not trying to take care of himself," Braine said.

Braine said the angioplasty was needed to clear an artery that was 100 percent blocked. He was aware of the coach having any heart problems.

"He'll be in hospital probably three or four days, but they do expect a complete recovery," Braine said. "We expect him to be back here within a few days."

The Yellow Jackets were scheduled to practice Tuesday, Friday and Saturday, then take next week off for spring break. School offi-

cials were considering whether to cancel practice this week.

Kansas dismisses leading rusher

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Kansas' leading rusher John Randle was dismissed from the team Monday after being charged with hitting a man outside a bar.

Randle, a sophomore, was charged with misdemeanor battery for allegedly striking a man early Sunday morning in front of a downtown bar. Police said an officer saw the altercation and arrested the 20-year-old player, who led Kansas with 540 yards rushing last season.

Pac-10 to use instant replay

LOS ANGELES — The Pacific-10 will use instant replay in football next season, utilizing a system similar to one the Big Ten used last year. A replay official located in the press box will make the replay decision rather than the referee on the field. Coaches will not be allowed to challenge calls.

NASCAR suspends three crew chiefs

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — NASCAR on Tuesday suspended the crew chiefs for Jimmie Johnson, Kyle Busch and Kevin Harvick in a swift crackdown on cheating committed at Las Vegas Motor Speedway.

Todd Berrier was suspended for four weeks and fined \$25,000 for rigging Harvick's fuel tank to appear full when it actually wasn't during qualifying.

Chad Knaus was suspended for two weeks and fined \$35,000 when Johnson's race-winning car failed to meet the minimum weight requirement in Sunday's post-race inspection.

Alan Gustafson was suspended two weeks and fined \$25,000 because Busch's runner-up

car was too high in the post-race inspection.

In addition to the suspensions, the drivers were also docked 25 points. Rick Hendrick, the car owner for Johnson and Busch, was docked 50 points — 25 for each infraction. Richard Childress, the car owner for Harvick, was docked 25 points.

The penalty cost Johnson the series points lead, which he earned following his victory Sunday in Las Vegas.

Davenport wins; Roddick, Agassi advance

INDIAN WELLS, Calif. — Overcoming gusty winds that sent sand swirling and left a layer of grit on the court Monday, Lindsay Davenport beat Meghann Shaughnessy 6-2, 2-6, 6-2 in the Pacific Life Open.

When the wind died down a bit later in the afternoon, it was Andy Roddick who breezed. He needed only 45 minutes for a 6-1, 6-2 victory over Jiri Novak.

Andre Agassi also rolled into the fourth round, beating Andrei Pavel 6-3, 6-4. Maria Sharapova was a 6-2, 6-3 winner over Dinara Safina in a match of Russian teenagers.

Sorlie maintains lead in Iditarod

UNALAKLEET, Alaska — Norwegian Robert Sorlie kept his lead Tuesday in the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race as he entered the final stretch of the 1,100-mile race.

Sorlie, the 2003 champion, was the first musher to leave the Elm checkpoint, 123 miles from the finish. He is trying to win his second Iditarod in three tries.

Sorlie left Elm at 4:17 a.m. AST after resting his team for three hours. John Baker was about three hours behind Sorlie, followed by the three-time winner, Art King, defending champion Mitch Seavey and four-time winner Martin Buser.

Smith, Ford not laughing at NCAA's joke

Coaches are less than thrilled as UK and Eastern prepare to play

By MURRAY EVANS
The Associated Press

RICHMOND, Ky. — Travis Ford wore a brave face one day after learning his Eastern Kentucky Colonels would face second-seeded Kentucky in the opening round of the NCAA tournament.

A week ago, the former Kentucky point guard said several times he'd rather Eastern Kentucky not have to face his alma mater in its first tournament appearance since 1979.

But the selection committee matched up the 15th-seeded Colonels (22-8) against their rival from 30 miles away at the Austin Regional.

"I don't think it's either good or bad," Ford said. "We knew we were going to have to play somebody very, very good. We're going to be an underdog. We're going to have to play extremely well. It's going to be an incredible challenge for us."

A pairing of the rival seemed a bit unlikely last week, when Kentucky (25-5) was in the running for a No. 1 seed. But the Wildcats' 70-53 loss to Florida in the South-eastern Conference tournament final on Sunday dropped them to a No. 2 seed.

Ford thought a Kentucky-Eastern Kentucky matchup would be "too obvious" for the tournament committee to consider.

Kentucky coach Tubby Smith shared that sentiment.

"We would prefer that we be able to cheer for them," Smith said. "We're sure our fans would love to cheer for Eastern Kentucky, as well. But I guess the selection committee saw this as a good opportunity to match us up."

"I think they had to look at it and think, 'Let's do this.' I don't know any other reason they'd put two teams 30 miles apart from each other together. I think the NCAA got a little bit of a chuckle out of it at the end."

Travis Ford
Eastern Kentucky coach



Kentucky coach Tubby Smith, left, isn't thrilled with his team's first-round assignment in the NCAA tournament. It's against Eastern Kentucky, a team from a school only 30 miles away that is coached by Travis Ford, a former star guard at Kentucky. Ford likewise dislikes the idea of facing a friend and former colleague.

The decision by the committee to pair the Colonels and Wildcats isn't particularly popular one in central Kentucky, where the schools share a number of fans, although Kentucky loyalists are far more prevalent.

Eastern Kentucky forward Michael Haney even acknowledges growing up as a Kentucky supporter.

"I was born in Missouri, but I moved to Kentucky in the fourth grade," Haney, a senior, said. "I followed them. I was a pretty big UK fan."

Conversely, many Kentucky fans have begun following the Colonels in the five seasons that Ford has been coach. Ford played one season at Missouri before transferring to Kentucky, where

he played until 1994 under coach Rip Patton and helped the Wildcats reach the Final Four in 1993.

Ford ranks second in career free-throw shooting (88.2 percent) and ninth in career assists at Kentucky. He holds the single-game record for assists with 15 — set against Eastern Kentucky in 1993.

Kentucky-Eastern Kentucky is

one of only two first-round matchups between teams from the same state. Charlotte and North Carolina State were paired in the Syracuse Regional.

"I think there was a reason they did it," Ford said of the committee's rationale. "I think they had to look at it and think, 'Let's do this.' I don't know any other reason they'd put two teams 30 miles apart from each other together."

"I think the NCAA got a little bit of a chuckle out of it at the end."

Smith, who worked with Ford as an assistant to Pitino at Kentucky, is one of Ford's biggest fans. Smith and Ford have remained close — the Eastern Kentucky coach and his staff even stay in on a Kentucky practice earlier this season.

"We're excited for Eastern, that they're in," Smith said.

"They're very deserving. We watched (Ford) build that program the right way."

In his eight seasons at Kentucky, Smith has scheduled in-state schools when possible. The Wildcats have played Eastern Kentucky three times during his tenure, most recently last season, a 101-72 win by the Wildcats in Lexington.

"It's not like we don't play (each other)," Smith said. "You hate to play (in the postseason) against friends and peers that you have so much respect for. That's always tough, because somebody has to win and somebody has to lose."

Eastern Kentucky is 0-5 in NCAA A tournament play, while Kentucky has won seven national titles and reached the Final Four 13 times.

Only four 15th-seeded teams have won a tournament game. But Haney said the Colonels won't be intimidated.

"Once the ball is thrown up, anything can happen," Haney said. "It's happened four times for a reason — because it's possible."

MAC wondering what it takes to be invited to dance

By MICHAEL MAROT
The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Charlie Coles thought Miami of Ohio's résumé was strong enough for an at-large bid to the NCAA tournament: an 18-11 record, the mid-American Conference regular-season title, 29 in the RPI and a schedule strength of .49.

It didn't impress the 10-member selection committee, and Coles is worried about the message being sent to the MAC, which got just one team into the 65-team field despite five teams ranked in the top 55 of the RPI.

"What it says is that the committee has never respected our league," Coles said Monday, one day after the brackets were announced.

As usual, the six power conferences — Atlantic Coast, Big East, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac-10 and Southeastern — dominated the field, accounting for 31 of the 65 teams, including 25 of 34 at-large bids.

Add soon-to-be Big East members Louis-

ville and Cincinnati, from Conference USA, and the numbers increase to 33 and 26.

That left only eight spots open for teams in conferences like the MAC and Atlantic 10. Three of those were swallowed up by upset winners in the conference tournaments — something committee chairman Bob Bowlsby suggested Monday played a key part in some teams being left out.

"The committee thought there were better teams, but I would also suggest that some of the upsets may have affected the MAC teams, including Miami and Buffalo," Bowlsby said.

The annual debate about life in a mid-major league didn't end with that explanation.

A year ago, Saint Joseph's earned a top seed. This year, the Hawks (19-11) were doomed by a RPI of 60 and a 3-8 record against nonconference opponents.

Wichita State (20-9) of the Missouri Valley Conference was left out despite an RPI of 47. Three other teams were taken from the MVC — Southern Illinois, Creighton and Northern Iowa.

Northeastern (24-9) of America East didn't even appear on the NCAA's list of other teams considered despite an RPI of 42.

Bowlsby has talked frequently over the past two years about evaluating each school's complete resume, including conference RPI ratings.

According to the NCAA's own numbers, the MAC was the 10th strongest league this year. Conference USA, which ranked ninth, got four bids. The Mountain West and Western Athletic, which ranked 11th and 12th, each had two teams make it.

"You may eliminate somebody by their nonconference schedule or their road record. Those are things that are difficult to separate," Bowlsby said. "You can play yourself out of a bad seed, but you can't play yourself into the tournament. That's the harsh reality."

It's also what Miami, Buffalo, Kent State and Akron are dealing with now. Buffalo (22-9) was No. 32 in the RPI, Kent State No. 32 and Akron No. 35.

It wasn't just the MAC that was disappointed.

"My only hope was that the A-10 has historically done well in the tournament," Saint Joseph's coach Phil Martelli said. "I hoped it would have two representatives. When you're on the razor, you have to give a reason to put you in and a reason to keep you out."

Coles, in his second stint as a MAC coach, understands the predicament for schools like Miami.

If you don't win a large number of games or earn the league's automatic bid, you must bring something else — like a potential first-round draft pick. Coles had that in Dan Majerle at Central Michigan and in Wally Szczerbiak at Miami. Szczerbiak's last season at Miami, 1999, was also the last time the MAC had an at-large team make the NCAA field.

"I think it takes a little star power, and a little location power," Coles said. "People want to talk about Northern Iowa getting in, but what about the four teams that play 10 or 11 home games and go 7-9 or 8-8 in the conference. Did they over-achieve? I don't think so."

Coaching moves from 2003 felt atop brackets

Jayhawks, Illini, Heels set on paths by hirings

BY TODD HARMONSON
The Orange County Register

Nothing is all that earth-shattering about a college basketball coach being shoved out the door.

It happens all the time, and the aftermaths rarely are felt beyond the borders of a program that pushed away an old problem only to find a new one.

But when it happened two years ago at the epicenter of the game, Tobacco Road, it started a ripple effect that severely shook three of the top teams in the nation and produced tremors that still might be felt in the Final Four in St. Louis.

Few major teams were worse at the end of the 2003 season than North Carolina, but nearly two years after the ouster of coach Matt Doherty, the Tar Heels were selected Sunday as a No. 1 seed for the NCAA tournament.

"To think of that point and where we are right now, I never had those thoughts," said Roy Williams, the former North Carolina assistant the Tar Heels lured home from Kansas as Doherty's replacement. "I just couldn't do that."

And it's nearly as difficult to imagine that Illinois and Kansas could be right at the top with North Carolina after they took the direct hits created by Williams' move to Chapel Hill, N.C.

The Jayhawks replaced the coach who had taken them to the



The careers of Kansas coach Bill Self (left), Illinois coach Bruce Weber (center) and North Carolina coach Roy Williams (right) intertwined two years ago as North Carolina sought to replace its coach. When Williams left Kansas to take over the Tar Heels, Kansas hired former Illini coach Self, and Weber took over at Illinois.

lost to Syracuse in the national title games.

"With expectations, it forces you team to play in a situation where there is a bigger bull's-eye on your back, which naturally should help you play games later in the season because they are pressure-packed games," Self said in a conference call.

"I think if you slide under the radar screen, sometimes you get a false sense of what you are."

The Jayhawks this season have gone from strong favorites to win the national championship to a team that had to fight through a slump, but they still are seeded third in the Syracuse Region.

Kansas has the potential to face North Carolina and Williams in the regional final if both teams advance that far, leading to a battle between the schools which were affected most by his move.

"I stillingers," Williams said. "I started recruiting (Kansas forward) Wayne Simien when he was in the seventh grade. You can't just forget a guy after something like that."

"So that part is still there. I'll always be a Kansas fan. But I won't ever be as big of a Kansas fan as I am now with all those kids on that team that I recruited."

Other recent coaching moves had major impacts on this season's tournament field. Washington as a No. 1 seed? Not without three-year coach Lorenzo Roman. And Ben Howland needed only two seasons to get UCLA into the NCAA tournament, though that might prove a difficult task for new USC coach Tim Floyd.

Still, those moves will go down as relatively minor shakeups on the college basketball landscape compared to the one that started April 1, 2003, and ended one month later.

Actually, there's a strong possibility it will be felt again when the sport's new champion is crowned on April 4.

2003 Final Four in New Orleans with the Illini's Bill Self, and Illinois filled Self's spot with Southern Illinois' Bruce Weber.

All Williams, Self and Weber have done this season is go combined 82-11, claim two of the four No. 1 seeds in the tournament that begins this week and establish their teams among the favorites to cut down the nets April 4.

That's not bad at Illinois and Kansas, where things were going rather well under Self and Williams, respectively. But it's an epic turnaround at North Carolina, where Doherty resigned under pressure after an abysmal 8-20 season.

"It's hard to imagine because they took more junk than any team that's ever played at North

Carolina," Williams said on a conference call.

"I don't know if North Carolina has ever gone 8-20, so those kids have hung around and done some really good things."

No team has done more good things this season than top-ranked Illinois, where Weber has shown that his success at Southern Illinois has far more to do with coaching than the caliber of the competition.

Illinois was something of a fan favorite much of the season as it pursued perfection, but even with one loss, the Illini win supporters because of their high-paced, guard-oriented style. And Weber became a sentimental pick last week when he left a Big Ten Tournament game and learned that his mother suddenly had died.

Weber's players, however, have adopted as much of an underdog mentality as possible for the No. 1 team in the nation because they have heard their doubters throughout the season.

"They don't think Illinois is the best team in the country," Illini point guard Dee Brown told the Chicago Sun-Times. "Just watch TV. They'll tell you we're playing in a weak conference."

"Do I believe them? You see us play every day. We play team basketball. We know how good we are. People have got to fear us."

Before the season, no team was feared more than Kansas. Sure, Self had a lot to do with it, but he also was coaching a group of seniors who had been in the Final Four under Williams and barely

Play-in teams survived tough seasons to get their shot

BY RUSTY MILLER
The Associated Press

DAYTON, Ohio — As an NCAA moderator introduced Oakland coach Greg Kampe on Monday night, he mentioned the Grizzlies' 12-18 record.

"You really had to bring that up, didn't you?" Kampe sulked in mock disgust. "Couldn't you have said 18-12?"

The Grizzlies and Alabama A&M (18-13) will meet Tuesday night in the play-in game at the University of Dayton after weathering seasons filled with adversity.

Oakland opened its eighth season in Division I on 10-7, losing by an average of 13 points a game. The opponents: Illinois, Marquette, Xavier, Missouri, Texas A&M, Kansas State and Saint Louis.

"We understand our record is not what some people think it should be. We make no apologies," Kampe said. "Our schedule was ranked No. 1 by the Sagarin ratings at the end of the non-conference. I wouldn't do that again, but it definitely prepared us to get here."

The Grizzlies regrouped to win their last five games, winning the Mid-Continent

"We understand our record is not what some people think it should be. We make no apologies."

Greg Kampe
Oakland coach

Conference tournament title by pulling off three upsets on consecutive days by a total of seven points to grab their first NCAA tournament bid. It took Pierre Dukes' three-pointer with 1.3 seconds left for Oakland to upset top-seeded Oral Roberts 61-60 in the final.

That shot extended the streak to four years in a row that a team with a losing record has made it into the NCAA field.

Asked what the 0-7 record says about Oakland's players, Alabama A&M forward Joe Martin said, "They're tough. They didn't get down on themselves. They kept playing and they found a way."

A&M's problems weren't on the court. They won the Southwestern Athletic Conference's regular-season title and then rolled to the conference's tournament championship to also make their first trip to the NCAA tournament.

Before the season started, coach Vann Pettaway called his team together to tell them that he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer. His doctors suggested he leave the team to receive treatment but he returned for what has become a magical ride.

"Basketball has been good medicine for me," he said. "They (the doctors) told me to take the year off, but there's no way I could have made it without basketball."

The best medicine he could have received this season was working with his players.

"When I was first diagnosed, everything fell apart. I was through," Pettaway said. "I heard the word cancer and the first thing I thought of was death."

Pettaway will complete radiation treatments when this season ends.

Accustomed to learning X's and O's, his

players picked up a larger lesson in toughness from him.

"It motivated us." Bulldogs star guard Obie Trotter said of his coach's struggle. "That's the type of person he is. He never gave up."

Pettaway is 384-181 in 19 seasons at the 6,000-student school in Normal, Ala., guiding the transition from Division II to Division I in 1999.

Kampe has spent 21 years at Oakland, a campus of 16,500 students in Rochester, Mich., going 348-254 while also leading the move up to Division I.

After all those years on the sidelines, both coaches are enjoying finally making it into the tournament. Neither is worrying about what happens next — win or receive the dubious honor of playing top-seeded North Carolina in its home state on Friday.

Their players refuse to look at the play-in game as an overlooked bout on the undercard.

"It's still the only college game that's being played tomorrow night," Oakland's Courtney Scott said. "I consider it an NCAA tournament game. And we need to win it to continue on."

Slumping Terps, Irish get second chance

BY HOWIE RUMBERG

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Maryland and Notre Dame faltered down the stretch, and now they'll have to finish their seasons in the NIT.

"One of our goals was to win the national championship, and right now we're not in the tournament," Maryland forward Nik Caner-Medley said Sunday. "As a team we didn't reach our goals, so I'm disappointed."

Maryland (16-12) lost five of six, including the last four, and was eliminated by Clemson in the first round of the ACC tournament.

The rough finish helped snap its school-record 11 straight trips to the NCAA

tournament. The Terrapins will play Wednesday against Oral Roberts, which is making its first postseason appearance in eight years.

"This is something our guys will be excited about, especially playing Maryland and playing on national TV," Oral Roberts coach Scott Sutton said. "We'll be playing in front of the entire country."

Notre Dame is making its second straight trip to the NIT after losing four of its last five, including an embarrassing 72-65 loss to last-place Rutgers in the first-round of the Big East tournament. Coach Mike Brey felt one more win probably would have clinched an NCAA berth.

"You can say all you want, we had opportu-

nities," Brey said. "You had chances to nail it and you didn't nail it."

Instead, the Fighting Irish will face Holy Cross (24-6) Tuesday in South Bend.

The 68th National Invitation Tournament started Monday with Western Michigan beating Marquette 54-40. The final is on March 31 at Madison Square Garden.

Conference USA had five schools selected for the 68th NIT, the ACC and Mid-American Conference each had four teams chosen, and the Colonial Athletic Association had three. America East is sending two teams — Northeastern and Boston University — to the tournament for the first time. The Big East, Big 12, Pac-10 and Southeastern Conference each had two.

W. Michigan rolls in NIT first round

The Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Levi Rost had 18 points and Brian Snyder added 11 to lead Western Michigan over Marquette 54-40 in the first round of the NIT on Monday night.

Marquette (19-12) was without leading scorer Travis Diener, who sustained a season-ending hand injury in practice last week.

"What concerned us was they played four games already without Travis and we didn't have film on any of them," Western Michigan coach Steve Hawkins said.

Marquette, making its second straight trip to the NIT after reaching the NCAA Final Four in 2003, made a season-long three-pointer in 21 attempts.

"The game tonight was certainly not how we built the program during my first six years here," Marquette coach Tom Crean said. "You cannot let your offensive woes carry over to the other end and give up easy baskets. You just can't do it."

The Broncos (20-12) won their first game of the NIT for the second time in three years and will play the winner of Wednesday's matchup between Texas Christian and Miami (Ohio) in the second round.

Brian Snider added 11 points for the Western Michigan, which had its best defensive game since beating Central Michigan 84-39 on Jan. 29.

Sophomore Dameron Mason led Marquette with 14 points, while Marcus Jackson had 11 rebounds. The Golden Eagles were held to less than 40 points for the second time in three games.

Western Michigan scored the first five points of the second half to open a 32-23 lead. But Todd Townsend scored eight of Marquette's first 10 points to help the Golden Eagles close to 37-33.

Marquette then went 3-14 without a point and 6-19 without a field goal, and Western Michigan took a 42-33 lead on Rost's second three-pointer of the half.

Marquette has lost 10 of 15.

"I never pictured going out like this," said Townsend, a senior.

NIT

Open Round

Wednesday
Drexel (17-11) at St. Joseph's (9)
Hofstra (21-8) at Saint Joseph's (19-11)
Virginia Commonwealth (13-12)
Rice (19-11) at Southwest Missouri State (16-12)
Kent State (20-12) at Western Kentucky (21-10)
Denver (20-10) at San Francisco (16-13)
CS Fullerton (18-13) at Oregon State (17-14)

First Round

Monday
Western Michigan (19-12) at Marquette (19-12)
Tuesday
Holy Cross (24-6) at Notre Dame (17-11)
Northern Iowa (22-9) at Siena (13-13)
Yamadori (18-13) at Indiana (17-13)
Clemson (16-12) at Virginia Tech (16-12)
DePaul (19-10) at Missouri (16-16)
Texas Christian (19-13) at Miami (Ohio) (11-14)
Boston U. (28-8) at Georgetown (17-12)
Northeastern (22-9) at Siena (13-13)
Yamadori (18-13) at Indiana (17-13)
Oral Roberts (22-7) at Maryland (16-12)
Arizona State (16-12) at Virginia Tech (16-12)
Wednesday
New Mexico State (16-12) at Baylor (16-12)
CS Fullerton/Oregon St. vs. Denver/San Jose St.
Kent St./W. Kentucky vs. Houston/Hawkins St.
Drexel/Bufalo vs. Hofstra/Saint Joseph's



Nevada's Chad Bell stands on the sideline during the second half of No. 24 Nevada's 73-72 loss to Boise State during the second round of the Western Athletic Conference tournament. The loss ended a 10-game winning streak for Nevada, which earned a No. 9 seed in the NCAA tournament.

WAC loss could help No. 9 Nevada focus

BY SCOTT SONNER

The Associated Press

RENO, Nev. — As painful as it was for Nevada to end a 10-game winning streak in its opening league tourney game on its own floor, Nick Fazekas figures it may turn out to be just what the doctor ordered.

"It probably helps us to lose," Fazekas said Monday as No. 9 seed Nevada (24-6) prepares to face No. 8 seed Texas (20-10) in the opening round of the NCAA tournament at Indianapolis on Thursday.

"I think we were getting a little too comfortable. We probably needed to lose," said the 6-foot-11 sophomore named the Western Athletic Conference player of the year.

Nevada, the WAC's regular season champs, had won 20 of their last 22 before eighth-seeded Boise State stunned them 73-72 with a last-second rebound off a missed free throw in the league quarterfinals last Thursday night.

Coach Mark Fox said the Wolf Pack will need all the help they

can get to have a shot at knocking off the Longhorns, who are making their seventh straight NCAA appearance and advanced to the round of 16 each of the past three seasons.

"Texas has the kind of team that can make another deep run into the tournament," Fox told reporters on a teleconference call after watching videotape of Texas.

"They've got weapons everywhere. They have a coach that has taken a team to the Final Four. They are just terrific," he said Monday.

At times it sounded like Fox was raving about top-ranked Illinois — the team the winner of the Nevada-Texas game is likely to face — instead of the Longhorn squad that lost six of its last 11 and fell to Colorado in the Big 12 tournament.

"I knew they would be good defensively because I know what a great coach Rick Barnes is. On top of that, they are better offensively than I ever imagined," Fox said.

Brad Buckman, a 6-foot-8 junior averaging 12 points and 8.2 rebounds a game, and Jason Klotz, a 6-foot-9 senior averaging 11 points and 18 rebounds a game, "are the best big-men tandem we've seen and (Daniel) Gibson is the best guard by far we'll play against all year," Fox said.

Gibson, a freshman, is averaging 14.4 points, 4 assists and 3.6 rebounds per game. Fox said he watched him play in high school.

"Everybody said at the time he is going to be in the NBA and I don't think there is any question about that. It doesn't look like he has a weakness to be honest with you," Fox said.

"What he does for Texas, he could probably do for the (NBA's Dallas) Mavericks," Fox said. He's "explosive. He can beat you with the three-point shot, he can beat you in transition, he can beat you at the rim."

Barnes returned the compliments, suggesting in a separate call with reporters that Nevada likely would have finished among the top teams in the Big 12 Conference this year.

"They are a good team," he said. "I like the consistency they have shown. I think that stands out." They have five players back from a Sweet Sixteen team last year. They are one of the hottest teams in the country. They had won 10 straight before their conference tournament," he said.

In addition to Fazekas, Barnes said he has been impressed with the play of freshman point guard Ramon Sessions.

"They are not going to be wide-eyed about going to the NCAA tournament. With the kind of year they've had, they have to be confident and feeling good about themselves," Barnes said.

Fazekas, who ranks 12th in the nation averaging 21.5 points per game and 20th in rebounds with 9.4 per game, said he expects a physical game against the Longhorns but has gotten used to that facing double coverage in WAC play. His nose was broken in the regular season finale at San Jose State and he'll continue to wear a protective mask in NCAA play.

"The mask is no big deal. I don't even know it is on my face anymore," Fazekas said.

SPORTS



Redskins hot on heels of Brown
after former No. 1 overall pick
cut by Cleveland, Page 31

Lined up for the slaughter

Tournament limelight is short, bittersweet for sacrificial seeds

By NANCY ARMOUR
The Associated Press

Fairleigh Dickinson coach Tom Green was going over potential NCAA tournament matchups, daydreaming about his Knights playing Wake Forest. Or Washington. Maybe even North Carolina.

Daydreaming? Sounds more like a nightmare.

And 16th-seeded FDU wound up even worse than Green imagined, facing the biggest seed of them all, overall No. 1 Illinois on Thursday.

"Realistically, we know what a long shot it is," Green said Monday. "It's a huge challenge, to say the least."

That's life for the NCAA tournament's little guys. Getting a bid gives small schools like Fairleigh Dickinson, Richmond and Coppin State publicity and national exposure they'd never get otherwise.

But teams seeded 15th and 16th don't get much of a chance to enjoy the limelight, usually gone by the end of the first round in a blowout to one of college basketball's powerhouses.

"I told our players earlier in the week... we're going to have to upset somebody," said Travis Ford, whose 15th-seeded Eastern Kentucky squad goes up against No. 2 seed Kentucky on Thursday. "We're going to be an underdog. I can guarantee you that."

No 16th seed has ever beaten a No. 1 since the tournament expanded to 64 teams in 1985, and only four No. 15s have upended a second seed. Richmond at Syracuse 73-69 in 1991, Santa Clara upset Arizona 64-61 in 1993, Coppin State stunned South Carolina 76-65 in 1997, and Hampton surprised Iowa State in 2001.

But those few upsets are enough to give every small school hope, no matter how faint.

"It's happened four times for a reason. Because it's possible," said Michael Haney, a forward for Eastern Kentucky.

Haney isn't delusional, just optimistic. Those 15th seeds that pulled off upsets were just like his team and the others that were hard at work Monday, preparing to play behemoths such as Illinois, Duke and Connecticut.

OK, so Santa Clara had Steve Nash when the Broncos knocked off No. 2 Arizona in 1993. But these schools have guys who can play too. Haney ranks fifth in the country in field goal percentage, shooting a blistering 63 percent,



Delaware State players, first-time Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference champions, participate in a celebration in their honor on Monday in Dover, Del. Delaware State (19-13) is the No. 16 seed in the Austin Regional and will face Duke (25-5) in a first-round game on Friday in Charlotte, N.C.

while Obie Trotter of Alabama A&M — the ultimate sacrificial seed as one of the teams in the play-in game — leads the country in steals.

Besides, the law of averages says a No. 16 has to beat a No. 1 one of these days.

Western Carolina came close in 1996, missing two shots in the closing seconds to fall to Purdue 73-71. In 1989, two No. 1s got scares. Georgetown edged Princeton 50-49, but the Hoyas needed two blocks by Alonzo Mourning in the final six seconds. Oklahoma escaped with a 72-71 win after East Tennessee State missed a shot in the final second.

"It goes back to the saying, 'Respect everyone but fear no one,'" Ford said.

And, really, for those schools coming out of the smaller conferences, is there a difference between playing, say, top-seeded Duke and No. 4 Louisville?

"There's more and more parity," said Central Florida coach Kirk Spraw, whose team is seeded 15th for a second straight year and plays No. 2 Connecticut on Friday. "You take the first 15 teams in the country, maybe

"It's probably the biggest long shot ever as far as a 16 seed knocking off a team with one loss."

Tom Green
Fairleigh Dickinson coach

they're a notch above because of a couple of players. But you take programs 25 through 125, and how much difference is there really? I think that spread is getting narrower all the time."

Still, they know they're long shots. In Illinois, Green's squad gets a team that has lost one measly game all year. When Green and his assistants were making their scouting report, they looked for even the slightest weakness, and came up empty.

"It's probably the biggest long shot ever as far as a 16 seed knocking off a team with one loss," Green acknowledged. "I'm going to tell them point-blank a 16 has never beaten a 1," he added.

"I'll tell them about the history of the game a little bit. And tell them we have to play well this week."

But even if they wind up being an answer to a trivia question only diehard fans will remember five years from now, there are worse things than being a 15th and 16th seed. They at least have one more game to play.

This is their big chance to shine, too, with more attention on them in the next three or four days than the entire rest of the season. How many people knew Richmond's nickname was the Spiders before its big upset? Or that Coppin State was in Maryland? And if one of the little guys does pull off an upset — or even makes a serious run — it's guaranteed an arena full of fans. When UCF played Pittsburgh close in its first-round game last year, the Wisconsin fans at the Bradley Center jumped on the Golden Knight's bandwagon so fast it almost tipped over. Pitt eventually upset.

"It's great exposure for programs like ours, certainly on a national level. And it has a long shelf life," Spraw said. "People remember you were in the tournament,



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and that's obviously good for your school, your academic programs and your athletic programs."

And maybe, just maybe, this will be the year for a historic upset.

"You'd like to think it's going to happen someday, but it hasn't happened in 20 years," Green said. "Hopefully it'll happen in my lifetime, but we'll see."

Selig willing to testify; players' status uncertain Page 28

